

# Nevada Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS)

## Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan

December 2023

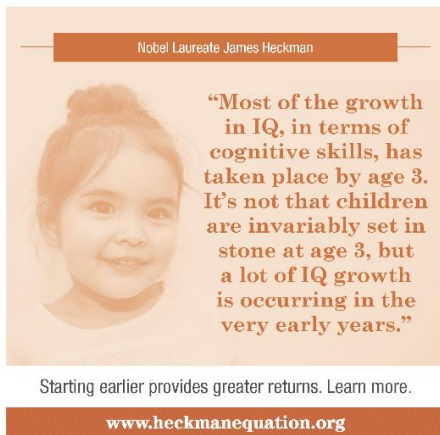


*The Nevada Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems: Health Integration Prenatal-to-Three Project is supported by a grant received from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov)*

The Nevada Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan supports a statewide unified vision of creating a comprehensive and coordinated [early childhood system](#) that improves equitable access to the programs and services young children and their families need to be healthy, safe, and successful in school and through adulthood. The Nevada Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Leadership Team was established in February 2023 to bring together key leaders in Nevada’s early childhood system to develop this unified vision. The ECCS Leadership Team includes approximately seventy representatives from fifteen public agencies and private organizations in the early childhood system throughout the state. Together, we have aligned identified strategic priorities for the prenatal to three population with existing initiatives, strategic plans and related efforts across the various sectors of the early childhood system in Nevada, including Early Care & Education, Health, Mental Health & Nutrition; Family Supports; and Economic Well-Being.

**Our Vision:** Families in Nevada with children prenatal to age three will have access to family centered early childhood services that are individualized to support their best health and development.

### Why Prenatal to Age Three?



Nobel Laureate James Heckman

“Most of the growth in IQ, in terms of cognitive skills, has taken place by age 3. It’s not that children are invariably set in stone at age 3, but a lot of IQ growth is occurring in the very early years.”

Starting earlier provides greater returns. Learn more.

[www.heckmanequation.org](http://www.heckmanequation.org)

Early childhood systems efforts generally include the entire period from pregnancy (in some cases pre-conception) up to age five or eight. The purpose of creating a strategic plan specific to the prenatal to age three population is to ensure that we are addressing the needs of this population, which can often be overlooked and under-prioritized. Despite being the most critical period of human development, programs and services to support the prenatal to age three populations are proportionally underfunded<sup>1</sup> and less accessible compared to those for older age groups.

Focusing on the prenatal to three population is a fundamental investment in the well-being of both our future society and each individual child. These earliest years are a critical window of opportunity when a child's brain is rapidly developing and forming the foundation for their

ability to learn and cultivate positive interactions. By providing equitable access to high-quality programs and services during this time, we can significantly enhance a child's [cognitive](#) and emotional development, setting them on a path for success throughout life. Moreover, nurturing the prenatal to three population is a proactive strategy for reducing societal inequalities, as it helps break the cycle of disadvantage and ensures that every child, regardless of their circumstances, has the best possible start in life.



**Babies and toddlers make up 3.4% of the U.S. population but receive just 1.5% of all federal spending.**

Zero to Three, August 2023

The focus on the prenatal to age three population as a foundational priority for child development is based on decades of research in brain science, as well as economics. There are a number of federal and state agencies, as well as private organizations and foundations that are prioritizing investments and research in this area. The Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center was established in 2019 at The University of Texas at Austin to conduct research on state level policies that are most effective at improving outcomes for infants and toddlers. They explain the focus on the prenatal to age three as follows:

*This time period is the most sensitive for a child’s developing brain and body, yet many families face substantial challenges during these years. Decades of research have shown that babies and toddlers thrive when they have loving, responsive interactions in the earliest years. Positive interactions with caregivers can produce long-term benefits not only for families, but also for society...The absence of such conditions can compromise a child’s ability to learn and grow throughout life... A comprehensive system to support infants and toddlers and their families ensures that parents have what they need to create nurturing environments for their children, that children are born healthy and receive assistance early if problems should occur, and that when children are not with their parents, they are in safe and engaging care environments. <sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Zero to Three, *The Federal Budget Makes it Clear Babies Aren’t a Priority*, August 2023. <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/resource/babies-in-the-budget/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://pn3policy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PN3PolicyImpactCenter\\_B001202101\\_WhyFocusonPN3.pdf](https://pn3policy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PN3PolicyImpactCenter_B001202101_WhyFocusonPN3.pdf)




## What is an Early Childhood System?

An “[early childhood system](#)” is comprised of all the programs, services and supports that young children and their families need to enhance optimal health and development. The system includes both direct services, as well as governance and support structures that enable programs and services to be delivered effectively.

A “[comprehensive early childhood system](#)” is a well-organized network of programs, services, and resources designed to support children prenatally through their early years. This system is designed to provide a [holistic](#) approach to child development and early education, addressing the various needs and stages of a child's growth. It includes the following program elements, which are often referred to as “early childhood sectors”:

1. **Early Education and Care:** Quality preschools, child care, and early education programs to support cognitive and social development. This includes programs such as [Head Start and Early Head Start](#), [Child Care Subsidy](#), and [Nevada Ready! PreK](#), among others.
2. **Health, Mental Health, and Nutrition Services:** Access to health and mental health screenings, regular medical check-ups, early intervention services, immunizations, and related health services, including access to proper nutrition, to ensure both pregnant persons and children are healthy and growing well. This includes programs such as [Medicaid and Nevada Check Up](#), [WIC](#), [NV Immunization Program](#), [Nevada Early Intervention Services](#) and more.
3. **Family Supports:** Programs to assist parents and caregivers in providing a nurturing and supportive environment for their children. This includes parenting education programs, [home-visiting programs](#), [family resource centers](#), child abuse prevention programs and others.
4. **Economic Well-Being:** Programs to provide financial support to families, as well as programs that focus on long-term economic stability. This includes programs such as credit counseling, job placement training services, [SNAP](#), [TANE](#), and housing and utility assistance, among other programs.



All underlined words in this document include links to definitions, descriptions or resources. Click on the word or phrase, then press Ctrl and click to go to the link.

In addition to the program elements, a [comprehensive early childhood system](#) also includes governance and support elements:

1. **Leadership and Governance:** This includes key decision-making for programs and services, as well as how the agencies which run the programs and services work together to create equitable access that meets the needs of children and families. This also includes how government entities include parents and families in decision-making.
2. **Partner Engagement:** This focuses on communication and engagement of all key partners including government agency staff, service providers from across all programs and services, parents and families, academic experts, and other community leaders. This element addresses how these partners work together and communicate to align programs and services that meet the needs of children and families.
3. **Financing and Budgets:** This component addresses how programs and services are funded and how those funding decisions are made. Funding plays a critical role in how these programs and services are delivered and to whom and where.
4. **Laws, Policies and Standards:** This element includes all of the laws, regulations, policies and standards that are enacted by elected officials and/or developed by agencies or programs at the federal, state and local levels. Policies and standards often control which publicly funded programs are developed, how they are funded and where they can operate, in addition to who is eligible to apply for and receive services. At the program level, policies can include hiring and training of staff, hours of operation, and other details of how a program is run on a day-to-day basis.
5. **Technology and Networks:** This includes how information is collected, shared and used to support programs and services, including the ability to determine which programs are working well, and which are not. At the program level, technology is needed to communicate with clients, support case management, and report activities to funders. At the system level, technology is used to make key funding and policy decisions. Support structures (how different technology programs connect and/or 'talk to each other') are setup to support a seamless flow of information across programs and agencies with effective and aligned technology that reduces administrative burdens for providers and families.
6. **Workforce:** This component addresses how the early childhood workforce is developed and supported to meet the needs of programs and services in the [early childhood system](#).



A [comprehensive early childhood system](#) aims to provide a seamless, unified, and coordinated approach to early childhood development, recognizing how various factors (health, safety, learning, etc.) that influence a child's well-being and potential must work together. This approach is crucial in setting the stage for a child's future success by addressing their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development during these formative years.

The Nevada Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan focuses on the governance and structure of an [early childhood system](#) which are all of the pieces in the background that make early childhood programs work. When these pieces are working well (coordinated and aligned) we generally see better services (easy to access and use, meeting the needs of children and families). When these elements are not well designed, it can make programs and services more difficult to access and can negatively impact the ability of children and families to get the programs and services that they need, in the way that they need them.

*“Accessing early childhood programs can be incredibly difficult for families, as they must navigate a thicket of overlapping and incoherent program and eligibility requirements. Moreover, the providers themselves often do not have the capacity to help families deal with the system’s fragmentation...When the state fails to provide capacity in the system, the cost of that is paid by the families and providers themselves.”*

Elliott Regenstein, [Early Childhood Governance: Getting There from Here](#), 2020



[Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#), Strategic Planning Meeting, November 2021

Home Means Nevada

The Nevada Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan is committed to focusing on the needs of **Nevada’s** children and families. As such, all of the pictures included feature Nevada residents!



## What We Aim to Achieve

The Nevada Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan lays out a unified vision and strategic priorities to support equitable access to the programs and services through a systems lens. Our priorities are focused on addressing systemic barriers and challenges that limit accessibility and use of programs and services, which improve outcomes for pregnant persons, infants and toddlers throughout the State of Nevada. Rather than serving as a stand-alone Strategic Plan, we aim to lay out specific goals and priorities that can be adapted into existing plans within Nevada's [early childhood system](#). These priorities are intended to align with the [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council's](#) Strategic Plan to ensure inclusion and prioritization of the prenatal to age three population.

### Our Values:

- **Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)** underscores our commitment to recognizing and celebrating the uniqueness of each child and family, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued, as well as providing the resources needed to support equitable access to programs that recognize those unique needs.
- **Parent and Family Engagement** is the cornerstone of our approach, emphasizing the vital role of parents and caregivers as active partners in their child's journey.
- **Resources and Sustainability** reflects our dedication to building a lasting legacy of quality care, ensuring that we have the capacity to achieve the outlined objectives and the ability to continue the work, as needed, into the future.
- **Partnerships and Coordination** emphasizes the need for collaboration and cooperation among various sectors of the early childhood system, ensuring that we are working together toward a shared vision to address the holistic needs of the prenatal to age three population.

### Key System Impacts:

Our efforts are focused on improving the early childhood system to achieve better outcomes for the prenatal to age three populations in Nevada. Below is a list of key system impacts that we intend to accomplish through this plan.

1. **Holistic Child Development:** The plan seeks to address the holistic needs of young children, including their educational, health, social, and emotional well-being, to ensure they receive comprehensive support during their early years, beginning prenatally.
2. **Elimination of Silos:** By breaking down barriers between different sectors, the plan aims to eliminate service silos (working separately instead of together) and improve communication and collaboration among key decision makers and service providers. This leads to a more efficient and effective system.
3. **Equitable Access:** It intends to ensure that all pregnant persons and young children, regardless of their background or circumstances, have equitable access to high-quality services, reducing disparities among our most underserved and vulnerable populations.
4. **Improved Quality:** Through collaboration, the plan seeks to enhance the quality of services by sharing best practices, resources, and knowledge across sectors, leading to better outcomes for children and families.
5. **Cost-Effective Solutions:** Collaboration can lead to more cost-effective solutions as resources are optimized, reducing duplication and inefficiency.
6. **Comprehensive Family Support:** The plan recognizes the role of families as a child's first and most influential teachers. It seeks to empower and support families in their critical role in child development.
7. **Sustainability:** By aligning resources and efforts, the plan aims to create a sustainable system that can endure and continue to provide support for future generations.



Photo credit: The Children's Cabinet



# EARLY CHILDHOOD LANDSCAPE

2023 Kids Count Data Book

## National Rankings

Nevada ranks toward the bottom of nearly all social indicators for children and families when compared to other states. While strides have been made to improve programs and services, there are still areas needing improvement.



**OVERALL RANKING**



**ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**



**EDUCATION**



**HEALTH**



**FAMILY & COMMUNITY**



**104,300**  
Children under age 3 in Nevada, 2021

**33,600**  
Live births in Nevada, 2021



**11.2%**  
of babies born **PRE-TERM** in Nevada

*compared to 10.5% for the U.S. average*



**15.6%**  
of Black, Non-Hispanic babies born **PRE-TERM** in Nevada

*compared to 14.8% for the U.S. average*

## Food Insecurity



**CHILDHOOD FOOD INSECURITY, 2021**



**VERY LOW FOOD INSECURITY, 2021**

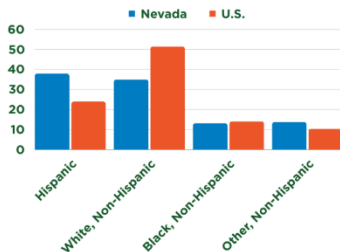
**20%**

of children under the age of three in NV live in **POVERTY**

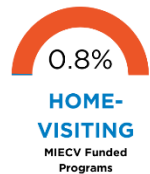
*<100% of the Federal Poverty Level*



## Race/Ethnicity Children under age 3, 2021



## Percentage of ELIGIBLE Children enrolled in or receiving early childhood programs/services



The early childhood system needs for this population in Nevada are expansive. While there are many programs and services available to support the holistic needs of young children and families, most programs are significantly underfunded and lack the capacity to serve more than a fraction of the population that are eligible and in need of these supports.

### Data Sources:

Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023 Kids Count Data Book, Nevada Profile - <https://assets.aecf.org/m/databook/2023-KCDB-profile-NV.pdf>  
Feeding America, The Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity 2021 - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/coronavirus-hunger-research>  
Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and Development  
Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Analytics  
Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, 2023 Nevada Roadmap - <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/nv>  
Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, 2023 Nevada Demographics - <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/nv/demographics>  
Zero to Three, State of Babies Yearbook 2023, The State of Nevada's Babies - <https://stateofbabies.org/state/nevada/>



# NV Prenatal to Age Three Strategic Plan

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES



### GOAL 1: Increase equitable access to programs and services utilizing a targeted universalism approach.

**Objective 1.1:** Increase awareness of existing programs and services available to the prenatal to age three population and opportunities for two-way communications with families, based on their needs and preferences.

**Objective 1.2:** Streamline application processes and reduce administrative barriers for identified prenatal to three populations.

**Objective 1.3:** Scale up existing programs and/or implement new programs to ensure all eligible populations have equitable access to programs and services that meet their needs and improve outcomes for the prenatal to three population.



### GOAL 2: Meet the needs of families by developing a family-centered early childhood system.

**Objective 2.1:** Coordinate cross-sector collaboration of parent and family leaders to align vision, priorities and advocacy impact.

**Objective 2.2:** Strengthen and/or expand opportunities for parents and families who are pregnant and/or parenting young children, ages zero to three, to engage in leadership & decision-making within the early childhood system.

**Objective 2.3:** Remove barriers to [authentic engagement](#) of parents and family leaders in the early childhood system.



### GOAL 3: Develop an early childhood system that is unified across sectors.

**Objective 3.1:** Identify and support opportunities for cross-sector engagement of prenatal to age three systems leaders, partners, providers, and families to promote collaboration and alignment.

**Objective 3.2:** Improve communications between early childhood system partners and leaders, including families, to support the ability to share information and resources to create efficiencies and better coordination of programs, services, and initiatives.

**Objective 3.3:** Support the development of recommendations and strategies for early childhood system governance structure changes that support alignment and coordination of programs and services for the prenatal to age three population.

For more information contact Tiffany Olivas at [TOlivas@childrencabinet.org](mailto:TOlivas@childrencabinet.org) or visit our website at <https://www.childrencabinet.org/early-childhood-comprehensive-systems/>



## Goal One: Increase Equitable Access to Programs and Services Utilizing a Targeted Universalism Approach

[Equitable access](#) means that everyone has an opportunity to get what they need making sure that everyone, no matter who they are, where they live, or what they have, can have the same chances and benefits. It's about being fair and making sure that no one is left behind or treated differently just because of who they are or where they live. A [targeted universalism](#) approach means creating programs or policies that are designed for everyone but with a focus on the specific needs of the people who face the greatest challenges or disadvantages. It's a way of making sure that nobody gets left behind, and everyone can benefit, especially those who need the most support.

**Objective 1.1: Increase awareness of existing programs and services available to the prenatal to age three population and opportunities for two-way communications with families, based on their needs and preferences.**

### Program Level Activities

- Assess current outreach and communications strategies for connecting with eligible populations. How are you letting families know about programs and services and are you reaching the right population(s)?
- Develop key messaging for programs and services aimed at reaching the prenatal to age three population and share with early childhood systems partners to support opportunities for collaboration.
- Identify the resources and/or supports needed to expand outreach to the prenatal to three population.
- Garner input from families on outreach and communications strategies that meet their needs, including opportunities for families to ask questions, share barriers and ideas for program improvements.

### System Level Activities

- Support messaging and align outreach efforts of the [Early Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign](#) to highlight key prenatal to three programs and services and to focus on identified populations, including development of the [First5Nevada.org](#) website and Early Childhood Program [Eligibility Portal](#).
- Assess development and/or expansion of Comprehensive Screening & Connection Programs to provide support and navigation to identified populations.
- Identify opportunities to coordinate outreach and messaging among [early childhood system](#) partners to create streamlined information for families and to establish opportunities to blend/share programmatic resources for outreach and awareness.

### JEDI Approach

- Is program information available in multiple languages and easy to understand?
- Are materials easy to access for those without technology?
- Are words and images culturally relevant and reflective of the primary audience?

### Key Measures

- Increase the number of participants in the prenatal to age three underserved or vulnerable population who are accessing key programs and services.
- Reduce disparities in service utilization for key programs and services.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Early Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign](#) ~ [First5Nevada.org](#) website and [Early Childhood Eligibility Portal](#); [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#) Communications & Engagement Subcommittee; [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



*It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.*

- Frederick Douglass





**Objective 1.2: Streamline application processes and reduce administrative barriers for identified prenatal to three populations.**

**Program Level Activities**

- Assess accessibility of program information including ease of locating and understanding eligibility requirements, documentation requirements and application processes.
- Gather and identify barriers regarding program applications, eligibility, documentation, and program accessibility.
- Identify opportunities, in alignment with state and federal requirements, to streamline the application process for families, including submission of applications and documentation through mobile devices.

**System Level Activities**

- Establish family-friendly mechanisms to gather and respond to barriers identified by identified prenatal to age three populations in regard to program applications, eligibility, documentation, and program accessibility.
- Assess policy changes needed to streamline the application process and reduce barriers to families, including, but not limited to [presumptive eligibility](#), extended eligibility windows, and expansion of eligibility requirements.
- Assess and develop a comprehensive plan to establish a [Coordinated Intake & Referral System](#) that is inclusive of programs and services for the prenatal to age three population.
- Provide input and assess the feasibility of establishing [Online Applications and/or a Universal Application System](#) that is inclusive of programs and services for the prenatal to age three population in collaboration with relevant government entities.

**JEDI Approach**

- Are parents and/or families involved in identifying barriers, as well as development of changes that address their needs?
- Are applications easy to access and understand?
- Have eligibility requirements, policies and procedures been assessed to address systemic racial bias?

**Key Measures**

- Reduce administrative barriers for families trying to access services.
- Reduce the amount of time from application to service delivery.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Early Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign ~ First5Nevada.org website and Early Childhood Eligibility Portal](#); [Nevada 211](#); [Nevada Coordinated Intake and Referral System \(CIRS\) Workgroup](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



**Objective 1.3: Scale up existing programs and/or implement new programs to ensure all eligible populations have equitable access to programs and services that meet their needs and improve outcomes for the prenatal to three population.**

### Program Level Activities

- Assess needs of the population to determine which existing programs need to be expanded to serve all eligible populations, including which populations have the greatest need and where services are needed.
- Conduct program level cost modeling to determine the resources needed to scale up programs to meet population needs, including infrastructure and workforce development.
- Identify workforce needs, including training and certification requirements, to support expansion and/or implementation of identified programs and services.

### System Level Activities

- Assess and update the [Early Childhood Fiscal Gap Analysis](#) to determine the budgets necessary to scale and/or implement identified programs.
- Identify opportunities to align budgets across programs and sectors to create fiscal efficiencies, as well as new funding strategies to support identified expansion and/or implementation of programs.
- Assess and develop a [Workforce Framework](#) to support the development, recruitment, training, and compensation needs of the early childhood workforce needed to scale and/or implement identified programs.
- Define and identify key programs and services for the prenatal to age three population based on evidenced impact and the needs of the population and determine needs to scale or implement.
- Develop program briefs to support expansion efforts, aligned with comprehensive system needs.

### JEDI Approach

- Are parents and/or families involved in identifying which programs need to be expanded or created to meet their needs?
- Do staffing qualifications take into account lived experience in lieu of formal education requirements?
- Are staff representative of the population they serve?

### Key Measures

- Increase capacity of identified prenatal to three programs and services.
- Reduce workforce shortages.
- Funding needs to support expansion or implementation of programs identified.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Early Childhood Fiscal Gap Analysis and Fiscal Mapping Projects](#); [Early Childhood Workforce Framework](#); Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions; Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation; [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)

*When I got involved as a parent in councils and parent groups, I could see how my learning helped my children have access to more services in Nevada.*

- Nevada PEP Parent



## Goal 2: Meet the Needs of Families by Developing a Family-Centered Early Childhood System

A family-centered [early childhood system](#) is a circle of support where families are right in the center. It means that everything is designed with families to help them give their children the best start in life. The system is there to make it easier for parents and families to take care of young children, with programs, resources, and services that focus on the needs and well-being of the whole family. It's all about enabling families to help their children grow and learn in a loving and supportive environment.

**Objective 2.1: Coordinate cross-sector collaboration of parent and family leaders to align vision, priorities and advocacy impact.**

### Program Level Activities

- Assess capacity to develop and/or enhance a parent/family advisory group to provide input and advisory support for program services and implementation policies and practices.
- Identify opportunities to include participants in key decision-making and program development.
- Assess ability to provide stipends and other supports (child care, transportation, virtual participation, etc.) to support family engagement.

### System Level Activities

- Develop and/or expand list of current parent/family groups in the early childhood system to ensure inclusion of the prenatal to age three population.
- Support the establishment of convening(s) of parent/family groups across sectors to support alignment and coordination, cross-sector buy-in.
- Assess state level family engagement strategies and frameworks to ensure they address the unique needs of the prenatal to three populations.

### JEDI Approach

- Do parent/family advisory groups represent the diversity of Nevada's prenatal to three population related to race/ethnicity, geography, language, gender identity and abilities?
- Are efforts to engage parent/family groups inclusive of the entire early childhood system, representing various interests, needs and experiences?

### Key Measures

- Increase engagement of parents/families in program and system level decision-making.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [NV Early Childhood Family Leadership Council](#); [Preschool Development Grant Birth to Age 5](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); Nevada Head Start Association; [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



Thank you to members of the **Northern and Southern Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Councils**

for their contributions to the development of this Strategic Plan.



**Objective 2.2: Strengthen and/or expand opportunities for parents and families who are pregnant and/or parenting young children, ages zero to three, to engage in leadership & decision-making within the early childhood system.**

### Program Level Activities

- Support and/or promote engagement of program participants and/or parent advisory group in system level coordinating activities.
- Identify opportunities to provide program level leadership trainings or decision-making opportunities for parents/families.

### System Level Activities

- Identify and/or develop state level leadership opportunities for parents/families including, but not limited to advisory boards, commissions, and coalitions.
- Identify sustainable funding opportunities to support parent/family training, mentorship programs, stipends and other supports necessary to engage parent/family leaders.
- Identify and implement policies and practices to provide a supportive environment for parents/families in early childhood system efforts, including but not limited to advisory boards and related leadership positions.

### JEDI Approach

- Are information and materials provided in leadership & decision-making settings understandable and available in multiple languages.
- Are translation services and materials available for parents/families to actively participate in meetings and events.
- Do meetings and events ensure equitable access for parents and families with disabilities.

### Key Measures

- Increase number of parents and/or families with lived experience in leadership and decision-making roles within the early childhood system.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [NV Early Childhood Family Leadership Council](#); [Preschool Development Grant Birth to Age 5](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); Nevada Head Start Association; [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



*There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.*

- Nelson Mandela



**Objective 2.3: Remove barriers to authentic engagement of parents and family leaders in the early childhood system.**

**Program Level Activities**

- Assess program staff engagement with parents and families to support positive interactions and supportive relationships.
- Gather input from program participants to identify potential barriers to engagement.
- Identify program level funding to support parent/family engagement, including the ability to provide stipends to parents engaging in advisory or similar groups to assist with program improvement strategies.

**System Level Activities**

- Expand family leadership training for early childhood system partners to support changes in policy and practice to enhance meaningful and [authentic engagement](#) of parents and families in leadership and decision-making, including the unique challenges and needs of the prenatal to three population.
- Establish policies and funding mechanisms to provide stipends/financial support to families who engage in leadership and decision-making roles to compensate them for their time.

**JEDI Approach**

- Have you assessed barriers resulting from systemic racism, including relevant policies and procedures.
- Do you provide staff training on [Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion](#).
- What feedback mechanisms are available for parents and families to allow for equitable engagement, including technology, terminology and language.

**Key Measures**

- Increase number of parents and/or families with lived experience in leadership and decision-making roles within the early childhood system.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [NV Early Childhood Family Leadership Council](#); [Preschool Development Grant Birth to Age 5](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); Nevada Head Start Association; [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



### Goal 3: Develop an Early Childhood System that is Unified Across Sectors

A [unified early childhood system](#) is a comprehensive approach that facilitates the seamless coordination and collaboration among diverse partners, including families, healthcare providers, educators, caregivers, social service agencies, and community leaders. This system aligns resources and information-sharing to ensure that children and their families receive a cohesive and well-coordinated array of services, promoting optimal development and well-being in the early years of life. It fosters a collaborative environment where various professionals work together to provide comprehensive support for children and their families.

**Objective 3.1: Identify and support opportunities for cross-sector engagement of prenatal to age three systems leaders, partners, providers, and families to promote collaboration and alignment.**

#### Program Level Activities

- Identify current cross-sector partnerships including grants, projects and/or advisory positions.
- Assess need to establish new cross-sector partnerships to support program implementation, expansion, and quality improvements.
- Develop key talking points, presentations and/or briefs to outline programmatic activities, priorities and partnership opportunities for system partners outside of your program or sector.

#### System Level Activities

- Identification and assessment of state level advisory boards, commissions, and related entities, as well as state and local entities engaged with identified prenatal to age three programs, services, and priority populations.
- Establish mechanisms to assist prenatal to age three programs and services with cross-sector partners needed to support program implementation, expansion, and/or quality improvements.

#### JEDI Approach

- Do partnerships include community-based organizations, faith based groups or other trusted partners specific to your priority populations?
- Has an assessment of the demographics of state level advisory boards, commissions and related entities to support diversity and inclusion been conducted?

#### Key Measures

- Increase cross-sector partnerships in the early childhood system.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Nevada HRSA ECCS Health Integration Project](#); [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\) Birth to Age Five](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



**Objective 3.2 Improve communications between early childhood system partners and leaders, including families, to support the ability to share information and resources to create efficiencies and better coordination of programs, services, and initiatives.**

### Program Level Activities

- Identify and assess current strategies for communication with partners including newsletters, social media, meetings, coalitions, etc.
- Review contact and distribution lists to ensure inclusion of key prenatal to age three program and system partners, including cross sector representatives.
- Identify opportunities for additional partners in the [early childhood system](#) to participate in convenings or meetings to gain familiarity with programs, services and policies that could enhance cross-sector collaborations.

### System Level Activities

- Assess representation on all state level advisory boards, commissions, coalitions, and develop recommendations to enhance cross-sector representation.
- Establish mechanisms for sharing information, resources and opportunities between agencies, organizations and programs based on feedback and input from early childhood system partners.
- Identify and secure resources needed to develop, implement, and sustain communications strategies.

### JEDI Approach

- Do communications strategies ensure [equitable access](#) in terms of technology, language and ease of understanding?
- Are resources available for all partners, including community-based organizations that serve as trusted partners for priority populations?

### Key Measures

- Increase cross-sector partnerships in the early childhood system.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Nevada HRSA ECCS Health Integration Project](#); [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\) Birth to Age Five](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



**Objective 3.3: Support the development of recommendations and strategies for early childhood system governance structure changes that support alignment and coordination of programs and services for the prenatal to age three population.**

#### Program Level Activities

- Review report/recommendations from [Guinn Center Early Childhood Governance Study](#) to ensure appropriate support/inclusion of prenatal to age three populations and key programs.
- Provide feedback on impact of governance recommendations and strategies to programs, including opportunities to expand access and align services and supports to meet the needs of families.

#### System Level Activities

- Review report/recommendations from [Guinn Center Early Childhood Governance Study](#) to ensure appropriate support/ inclusion of prenatal to age three populations and key priorities.
- Convene system partners to provide input on recommendations with a focus on inclusion of the prenatal to age three population, programs, and services.

#### JEDI Approach

- Does the early childhood system structure support [authentic engagement](#) of key partners, including parents/families?
- Are early childhood system leaders and decision-makers representative of the population?

#### Key Measures

- Comprehensive early childhood governance structure in place, including all sectors of the early childhood system.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Nevada HRSA ECCS Health Integration Project](#); [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\) Birth to Age Five](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)

*My eyes were opened to different ways that I could help my child when I was able to see how early childhood services make a difference!*

- [Nevada PEP](#) Parent





## Objective 3.4: Improve cross-sector data collection, analysis, reporting, and data utilization.

### Program Level Activities

- Assess current data collection needs, methods, and utilization to determine what additional data is needed to address program expansion and/or quality improvements.
- Assess current reporting requirements and strategies for sharing relevant data with [early childhood system](#) partners, including protections for personal information.

### System Level Activities

- Support development of an [Early Childhood Integrated Data System](#), ensuring all prenatal to age three relevant data indicators, programs and services are included.
- Integrate data utilization into a communications plan to establish strategies for sharing and utilizing easy to understand information.

### JEDI Approach

- How do you engage parents/ families from diverse backgrounds, particularly those identified as underserved or vulnerable populations?
- Does program and system level data include key demographic characteristics, such as race and ethnicity?

### Key Measures

- Improved quality of services across sectors through sharing of best practices, resources, and expertise.
- Reduce administrative burdens and duplicative processes to generate efficiency and cost savings.

**Alignment with Key Initiatives:** [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#); [Nevada HRSA ECCS Health Integration Project](#); [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\) Birth to Age Five](#); [Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative](#); [Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program \(NV ITCP\) Statewide Expansion Project](#)



**Alignment of Nevada Prenatal to Three Strategic Plan and the  
Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (NV ECAC) 2022-2024 Strategic Plan**

[https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NECAC2022\\_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf](https://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NECAC2022_2024StrategicPlanFINAL.pdf)

<b>NV ECAC Goal 1: Created a Coordinated Early Childhood Leadership Infrastructure</b>	
<b>NV ECAC Objectives:</b>	<b>NV Prenatal to Three Objectives:</b>
1.1 - Establish the Governor’s Office for Early Childhood (prenatal to age eight) to align policy and fiscal decision-making for the early childhood system across relevant agencies.	3.4: Support the development of recommendations and strategies for early childhood system governance structure changes that support alignment and coordination of programs and services for the prenatal to three population.
1.2 – Restructure the Nevada ECAC to establish program and community level advisory support to the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Systems	
1.3 – Establish support and resources to ensure equitable engagement of parents and families in leadership and decision-making at the state and local levels.	2.1: Strengthen and/or expand opportunities for parents and families who are pregnant and/or parenting young children, ages zero to three, to engage in leadership & decision-making within the early childhood system.  2.2: Remove barriers to <a href="#">authentic engagement</a> of parents and family leaders in the early childhood system.  2.3: Coordinate cross-sector collaboration of parent and family leaders to align vision, priorities and advocacy impact.
<b>Nevada ECAC Goal 2: Increase Coordination and Alignment Between Systems of Care for Young Children and Families</b>	
<b>NV ECAC Objectives:</b>	<b>NV Prenatal to Three Objectives:</b>
2.1 – Conduct assessment of the strengths, disparities, inequities, strategic priorities and goals among programs and agencies within the early childhood system.	
2.2 – Produce and disseminate an early childhood system asset and gaps analysis.	3.1: Ensure that all identified prenatal to three programs, services and related entities are included in a detailed map of Nevada’s early childhood system.
2.3 – Integrate cross-sector priorities, goals and initiatives into the Nevada ECAC workplan to better coordinate and align services and improve access and outcomes.	3.2: Identify and support opportunities for cross-sector engagement of prenatal to three systems leaders, partners, providers and families to promote collaboration and alignment.
2.4 – Establish a workplan to update and align early childhood system standards, administrative rules and program practices.	



<b>Nevada ECAC Goal 3: Increase Capacity to Equitably Connect Families with the Early Childhood System Continuum of Care and Community at Large</b>	
<b>NV ECAC Objectives:</b>	<b>NV Prenatal to Three Objectives:</b>
3.1 – Implement a strategic two-way communications plan to engage and connect providers, families and stakeholders.	1.1: Increase awareness and utilization of existing programs, services and supports by underserved and vulnerable prenatal to age three populations, utilizing the definition adopted by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council. 3.3: Develop and/or support development of a cross-sector early childhood communications plan to address how partners/key leaders across sectors share information and resources to create efficiencies and coordination of programs, services and initiatives.
3.2 – Expand engagement, training and leadership opportunities for underrepresented and underserved populations.	2.3: Coordinate cross-sector collaboration of parent and family leaders to align vision, priorities and advocacy impact.
3.3 – Expand engagement, alignment and coordination of services among all early childhood system providers.	1.2: Streamline application processes and reduce administrative barriers for identified prenatal to three populations.
3.4 – Select and implement a centralized intake and referral system (CIRS) to streamline access and utilization of services.	
<b>Nevada ECAC Goal 4: Identify Budget and Finance Strategies to Drive Policy Goals and Objectives</b>	
<b>NV ECAC Objectives:</b>	<b>NV Prenatal to Three Objectives:</b>
4.1 – Perform fiscal analysis of early childhood funding streams and program development needs.	
4.2 – Identify funding pathways and policy changes needed to meet programs and system goals.	1.3: Scale up and/or implement new programs to ensure all eligible populations can access programs and services that meet their needs and improve outcomes for the prenatal to three population. 3.6: Identify opportunities for integrated, cross-sector funding for prenatal to three programs and services.
<b>Nevada ECAC Goal 5: Improve Data Collection and Integrated Systems to Increase Equity and Accountability</b>	
<b>NV ECAC Objectives:</b>	<b>NV Prenatal to Three Objectives:</b>
5.1 – Improve data collection by fostering understanding and collaboration with providers, families, policy makers and other stakeholders.	
5.2 – Increase availability of, access to, and use of data that can be disaggregated to drive informed decision-making.	3.5: Improve cross-sector data collection, analysis, reporting and data utilization.
5.3 – Implement an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) to improve service delivery.	



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Engagement of all system partners is crucial in building a foundation for the well-being and development of young children. Whether you're a parent, educator, policymaker, or community member, there are various ways you can contribute to shaping and enhancing Nevada's Early Childhood System.



### Attend a Meeting

Many early childhood system partners hold meetings that are open to the public and have opportunities for members of the public to provide comments or engage in discussions.

There are also numerous state and local advisory boards, commissions and related groups, such as the [Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council](#) and [Maternal and Child Health Advisory Board](#), that may have membership opportunities available.

To see a list of all public meetings, visit the Nevada Public Notice Website at [notice.nv.gov](https://notice.nv.gov).

To see a list of state level board and commissions, as well as current open seats, visit the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions at [gov.nv.gov/Boards/Board\\_FAQs/](https://gov.nv.gov/Boards/Board_FAQs/).

Review the Projects and Initiatives on page 23 for additional opportunities and contact information.



### Explore Resources

There are a lot of resources – websites, documents, videos, etc. – that help provide an overview and understanding of the early childhood system, as well as some of the specific sectors and functions in the system. Below are a few sites that you may want to explore to learn more about the early childhood system, as well as specific programs, services and initiatives at the state and national level.

#### Nevada:

- [First5Nevada.org](#) (coming in early 2024)
- [NevadaChildCare.org](#)
- [NVECAC.com](#)
- NV [Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems](#)
- [NevadaActEarly.org](#)
- [NV.MedicalHomePortal.org](#)

#### National:

- [BuildInitiative.org](#)
- [PritzkerChildrensInitiative.org](#)
- [DataCenter.AECF.org](#) (KIDS COUNT)
- [HRSA Early Childhood Systems Program](#)
- [Prenatal to Three Policy Impact Center](#)
- [ZeroToThree.org](#)



### Share Your Story

Sharing your story including experiences, barriers and recommendations can go a long way in helping to improve the system, ensuring that barriers are removed to provide equitable access to the programs and services that young children and their families need.

Legislative Advocacy – Attend a hearing or meet with a policymaker to let them know about your journey and recommendations you may have. Visit [www.leg.state.nv.us](https://www.leg.state.nv.us) to see upcoming meetings, find your legislators and learn more about the process. Or visit the Children's Advocacy Alliance at [caanv.org](https://caanv.org) for resources on policy advocacy.

NV Institute for Children's Research & Policy (NICRP) at UNLV collects stories to help inform research and policy efforts impacting children. You can share your story through their online form at [https://unlv.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_37Y0kIf58W14ZFk](https://unlv.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_37Y0kIf58W14ZFk)

**For additional opportunities or to explore any of the options above, please contact Tiffany Olivas at [TOLivas@childrenscabinet.org](mailto:TOLivas@childrenscabinet.org)**



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Authentic Family Engagement** refers to a collaborative and respectful partnership between families and early childhood programs. It involves recognizing and valuing the unique strengths, cultures, and perspectives that each family brings to the table. Authentic family engagement goes beyond traditional communication and involvement; it actively involves families in decision-making, planning, and the overall educational process. This approach fosters a supportive and inclusive environment where families are considered essential partners in promoting the well-being of young children, creating a more comprehensive and effective early childhood system.

**Cognitive Development** for young children refers to the growth and advancement of their mental abilities, such as thinking, problem-solving, memory, and understanding. It includes the processes through which children acquire knowledge, process information, and develop the essential thinking skills that will serve as the basis for future learning and intellectual growth.

A **Comprehensive Early Childhood System** is a well-organized network of programs, services, and resources designed to support children prenatally through their early years. This system is designed to provide a whole-child approach to child development and early learning, addressing the various needs and stages of a child's growth. It means that all of the sectors in the early childhood system (early learning and development; health, mental health and nutrition; family supports; and economic well-being) are working together to meet the needs of children and their families.

**Comprehensive Screening and Connection Programs** evaluate social predictors of a child's and family's long-term well-being. This can include housing, income, food security, and health coverage. Families are then connected to services and supports based on their individual needs. According to the Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center, there are three evidence-based models: DULCE, Family Connects and HealthySteps. Currently, none of these models are in operation in Nevada, although similar programs exist on a limited basis. For more information, visit <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2021/va/comprehensive-screenings/>.

An **Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)** is a comprehensive and coordinated information system that collects, manages, and analyzes data related to young children's development and learning. It integrates information from various sources, such as education, health, and social services, to provide a holistic understanding of a child's early experiences and help policymakers, educators, and researchers make informed decisions to support early childhood development.

An **Early Childhood System** is comprised of all of the programs, services and supports that young children and their families need to support good health and development. The system includes both direct service es, as well as governance and support structures that enable programs and services to be delivered effectively.

**Emotional Development** in young children refers to the growth of their emotional understanding and management. It involves gaining skills to recognize and express their feelings, develop empathy, and cope with various emotions in a healthy manner. Emotional development is a crucial aspect of a child's growth, shaping their ability to form relationships, manage stress, and navigate the complexities of social and emotional interactions. It lays the foundation for their overall well-being and mental health.

**Equitable Access** refers to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, circumstances, or characteristics, have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain the same resources, benefits, and opportunities. It is about eliminating disparities and providing a level playing field to ensure that no one is disadvantaged due to factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, or location.

**Holistic Child Development** involves nurturing all aspects of a child's well-being, encompassing their emotional, cognitive, physical, and social development. It's a comprehensive approach that ensures that children not only thrive academically but also emotionally, physically, and socially, fostering their growth into well-rounded individuals.



**Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)** is a framework and set of principles that promote fairness, equality, and respect for all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances.

- **Justice:** Ensures that everyone is treated fairly and impartially, and that there is fairness in the distribution of resources and opportunities.
- **Equity:** Strives to address and rectify historical and systemic inequalities by providing each individual with the support they need to achieve their full potential.
- **Diversity:** Celebrates and values the differences among people, including their backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives, recognizing that diversity enriches our communities and organizations.
- **Inclusion:** Promotes an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered, and where each person has the opportunity to participate fully and contribute to the collective goals and well-being of a community or organization.

Together, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion seek to create a system where all individuals have an equal opportunity to thrive and where differences are appreciated and embraced as strengths rather than barriers.

**Online Universal Application System** is a one-stop portal application for parents and families to access public programs and services that promote healthy growth and development in children. In Nevada, the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services manages ACCESS, an online application for several assistance programs, but there is currently no universal application system in place.

**Presumptive Eligibility** is a process that allows certain individuals to receive immediate, temporary access to benefits or services based on a preliminary assessment of their eligibility. In simpler terms, it is a provisional or temporary eligibility status granted to individuals who appear to meet the criteria for a specific program or service, providing them with immediate access while a more thorough determination is being made. This approach is often used to ensure timely access to essential services, especially in situations where waiting for a complete eligibility determination may cause delays in receiving necessary assistance.

A **Targeted Universalism** approach means creating programs or policies that are designed for everyone but with a focus on the specific needs of the people who face the greatest challenges or disadvantages. It's a way of making sure that nobody gets left behind, and everyone can benefit, especially those who need the most support.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

**Coordinated Intake and Referral System (CIRS)** is a bi-directional technology platform that connects health care, early learning and family support services partners to improve the health and well-being of young children and families by offering shared risk assessment and screening, real-time closed loop referral management, collaborative care coordination, standardized metrics, and data analysis and reporting functions. In Nevada, a workgroup has been established to assess the feasibility and key function of a CIRS for Nevada’s early childhood system. For more information, please contact Denise Tanata at [DTanata@childrencabinet.org](mailto:DTanata@childrencabinet.org).

**HRSA ECCS** – Health Resources Services Administration, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant – is a five-year (August 2021 to July 2026) grant administered by The Children’s Cabinet. The purpose of HRSA ECCS Project is to build an integrated maternal and early childhood system of care in Nevada that is equitable, sustainable, and comprehensive that promotes early developmental health and well-being. The project also seeks to increase family-centered access to care and engagement of the prenatal to age three population. For more information on the Nevada HRSA ECCS Project visit <https://www.childrencabinet.org/early-childhood-comprehensive-systems/> or contact Tiffany Olivas at [TOlivas@ChildrensCabinet.org](mailto:TOlivas@ChildrensCabinet.org).

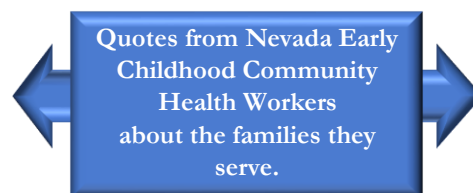
- **Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council (NECFLC)** is a program under the HRSA ECCS project which ensures that parents and families of young children have a voice and decision-making power in the early childhood system. There are currently two NECFLCs in Nevada, one in the North and one in the South. Participants meet monthly to receive training and technical assistance on early childhood systems issues, network with others and identify key issues to address. For more information, contact Ashley Dines (Southern NV) at [ADines@childrencabinet.org](mailto:ADines@childrencabinet.org) or Rosa Tamayo (Northern NV) at [RTamayo@childrencabinet.org](mailto:RTamayo@childrencabinet.org).

The **Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)** works to strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs. The ECAC was established by an executive order in 2009 and was codified into the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) in 2013. Membership includes a diverse group of early childhood system representatives that are appointed by the Governor and which follow the federal Head Start Act requirements for State Advisory Councils. For more information on the Nevada ECAC, please visit [nvecac.com](http://nvecac.com) or contact Sabrina Jones at [sabrina.jones@doe.nv.gov](mailto:sabrina.jones@doe.nv.gov).

**Nevada Early Childhood Fiscal Map and Gap Analysis** is a project to identify current funding and gaps in funding for a wide range of early childhood programs and services. The Nevada Early Childhood Fiscal Map is a tool developed in partnership with the Children’s Funding Project, used to visualize funding streams affecting young people in Nevada. The fiscal map, covering ages 0-24, is available on the Nevada ECAC website at [nvecac.com](http://nvecac.com). The Gap Analysis will look at how much funding is needed to provide equitable access to programs and services, and will be followed by a revenue study to identify potential funding sources. The entire project is projected to be complete by December 2024. For more information, contact Denise Tanata at [DTanata@childrencabinet.org](mailto:DTanata@childrencabinet.org).

**Nevada Early Childhood System Governance and Structure Analysis – The Guinn Center for Policy Priorities** is currently conducting an analysis of Nevada’s early childhood governance structure, taking a deep dive into our current system, as well as how other states are structured. The full report, which will include recommendations for improving Nevada’s early childhood governance structure, will be released in 2024. For additional information, please contact Denise Tanata at [DTanata@childrencabinet.org](mailto:DTanata@childrencabinet.org).

*“[A] lot of families... don’t know what [services are] available and they might not know what to look for in [child] development.”*



*“When they [parents] aren’t worried about all the other things in life... they can really focus on their children.”*



The **Nevada Early Childhood Marketing & Outreach Campaign** was launched in January 2023 to raise awareness of the importance of early childhood, as well as to ensure that parents, families and providers were aware of and connected to available resources and supports. The campaign is led by Purdue, Marion & Associates, and is managed by The Children’s Cabinet through grants from the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services and the Nevada Department of Education. The first year of the campaign focused on access to child care ([NevadaChildCareFund.org](http://NevadaChildCareFund.org)) and will be expanding focus in 2024.

- **First5Nevada.org** will launch in early 2024 to serve as a comprehensive resource for early childhood programs and services for parents and families throughout the state. The site will feature an online **Eligibility Portal**, modeled after First5SC.org, that will enable users to answer a few simple questions to identify which programs and services they may be eligible for. For additional information on the campaign, including the upcoming website and eligibility portal, please contact Denise Tanata at [DTanata@childrenscabinet.org](mailto:DTanata@childrenscabinet.org).

**Nevada Early Childhood Workforce Framework** The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) Child Care and Development Program partnered with The Children’s Cabinet to create a **framework** supporting Nevada’s Early Childhood Education professionals and families. Workgroups are currently meeting to address implementation strategies for the framework, which was completed by SRI Education through funding from the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services. For more information, please contact Marty Elquist at [Melquist@childrenscabinet.org](mailto:Melquist@childrenscabinet.org).

The **Nevada Infant/Toddler Court Program (NV ITCP) Statewide Expansion Project** is a federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), five-year funded grant awarded through its Maternal and Child Health Bureau in August 2022. The primary goal, through the implementation of the ZERO TO THREE “Safe Babies”™ court team model, is to increase access of children birth to three years of age under court jurisdiction, who are in foster care or at risk of removal, and their families in Nevada to expedited, comprehensive supports that: prevent children’s removal and placement in foster care; promote reunification and lasting permanency, strengthen family protective factors including enduring positive social connections; and protect and build safe, stable, and nurturing early relationships. For more information, please contact the Project Director, Rhonda M Lawrence, LMFT at [rlawrence@dcsf.nv.gov](mailto:rlawrence@dcsf.nv.gov).

**PDG B5 – Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five** – The Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) was awarded a three year (2023 to 2025) \$30 million Federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through 5 (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant. The purpose of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant is to strengthen Nevada’s Early Childhood Comprehensive System through collaborative partnership with stakeholders and families. For detailed information on the grant, please visit <https://ndeold.instructure.com/courses/5> or contact Rachel Stepina at [Rachel.stepina@doe.nv.gov](mailto:Rachel.stepina@doe.nv.gov).

The **Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative** aims to expand services to low-income infants, toddlers and their families. To achieve this goal, Strong Start Nevada PN-3 coalition uses a coordinated, cross-sector policy agenda to advocate for maternal and child health programs, early care and education programs, and family support services. The initiative is funded through a grant from the Pritzker Children’s Initiative to the Children’s Advocacy Alliance. For more information, please visit <https://www.caanv.org/services/> or contact Jamelle Nance at [Jamelle.nance@caanv.org](mailto:Jamelle.nance@caanv.org).





## EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM PROGRAMS & SERVICES

*The following is a list of some of the early childhood system programs and services that are referenced in this report. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all early childhood programs and services available in Nevada.*

The **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Nevada Child Care and Development Program** (sometimes referred to as “child care subsidy”) is administered by the Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS). DWSS partners with The Children’s Cabinet and the Las Vegas Urban League to provide eligibility and application case management, and to provide support to child care providers. The program assists income-eligible families in obtaining child care so they can work, receive job training, or finish a higher education/vocational training program. For more information, visit <https://www.nevadachildcare.org/child-care-subsidy-assistance/>.

**Head Start** and **Early Head Start** are federally funded programs that aim to promote the school readiness of young children from low-income families. Early Head Start typically serves pregnant women and children from birth to age three. Head Start serves children aged three to five years old. Both programs emphasize a holistic approach, considering not only the educational needs of children but also their health, nutrition, and family support to ensure a well-rounded foundation for learning and growth. For more information about Head Start and Early Head Start, including how to find programs in Nevada, visit [eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov).

**Family Resource Centers (FRCs)** were established by legislation in 1995 and are administered by Division of Health and Human Services. FRCs provide information, referrals, and case management to residents in 18 defined service areas, defined by residential zip code. Services are provided through contracts with community based organizations throughout the state. For more information, please visit [https://dhhs.nv.gov/programs/grants/programs/frc/family\\_resource\\_center/](https://dhhs.nv.gov/programs/grants/programs/frc/family_resource_center/).

**Medicaid** and **Nevada Check Up** are government programs, funded jointly by federal and state governments, designed to provide healthcare coverage for low-income individuals and families. At the federal level, Nevada Check Up is referred to as “CHIP – Children’s Health Insurance Program” and focuses on providing healthcare coverage for children in families with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, but still facing financial challenges. In Nevada, the programs are administered by the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP) in partnership with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, which handles eligibility. Medicaid and Nevada Check Up services are provided through Managed Care Organization (MCOs), which are insurance companies that contract with the state to provide these services. However, in rural areas and for some specific populations, the DHCFP pays claims directly to healthcare providers through a “fee for service” basis. For more information on Medicaid or Nevada Check Up visit [https://dwss.nv.gov/Medical/1\\_0\\_Apply\\_for\\_Assistance/](https://dwss.nv.gov/Medical/1_0_Apply_for_Assistance/).

**Nevada 2-1-1** is a special telephone number reserved to provide information and referrals to health, human and social service organizations. Dialing 2-1-1 in almost every part of the United States will connect you to human and social services for your area. 2-1-1 services include places to find emergency food, housing and emergency shelter locations, children’s services, support for seniors, older persons, and people with disabilities, and mental health and counseling services, among many others. Resources can also be accessed online at [nevada211.org](http://nevada211.org).

The **Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS) System** provides services to children birth until three with developmental delay or disabilities, and their families. The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the Lead Agency for Early Intervention Services (EIS). The Part C Office provides the oversight of Early Intervention Services of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#). The IDEA was created with a vision for comprehensive, interagency, multidisciplinary, family-centered, and community-based services accessible to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and to many who are at risk for disabilities. This law has been reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) or Public Law 108-446. Project ASSIST is Nevada’s early intervention Central Resource Directory, which includes information and resources. For additional information, please visit [dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST/](http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/IDEA/ProjectASSIST/).

**Nevada Home Visiting Program** is a federally funded program, often referred to as **MIECHV** (Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting) Program, which is administered through the Division of Public and



Behavioral Health. Home visiting is a service offered to support positive parenting, develop nurturing homes, and promote healthy child development through regular home visits by trained professionals. The Nevada Home Visiting Program supports agencies and organizations which administer home visiting services to pregnant women, mothers, fathers, and caregivers in the education of their young children to improve maternal and newborn health, improve school readiness, and to reduce child injuries, neglect, and abuse. For more information, please visit [https://dphh.nv.gov/Programs/MIECHV/Nevada\\_Home\\_Visiting\\_\(MIECHV\)\\_-Home/](https://dphh.nv.gov/Programs/MIECHV/Nevada_Home_Visiting_(MIECHV)_-Home/).

**Nevada Ready! State Pre-K Program** promotes social, emotional, and academic development by building capacity for equitable high quality pre-k services for Nevada's children and families. The program is funded through state and federal funds which are administered by the Nevada Department of Education in partnership with local school districts and nonprofit partners to provide Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs in elementary schools and child care centers. For more information on the program and a list of grantees, visit <https://doe.nv.gov/early-learning-development/nevada-ready-state-pre-k/>.

The **Nevada State Immunization Program (NSIP)** is administered by the Division of Public and Behavioral Health and works with Nevada's local health departments, hospitals, schools, and clinics to facilitate vaccine distribution and programs. The focus is ensuring equitable vaccination access across Nevada's population. The program serves as a trusted immunization resource and inspires a culture embracing immunization to protect the public from vaccine preventable disease. NSIP manages the Nevada WebIZ program (the statewide immunization information system) and the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program (federally funded program to provide no-cost vaccines to eligible children), among others. For more information, please visit <https://dphh.nv.gov/Programs/Immunizations/>.

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, formerly known as food stamps, is a federal assistance program that helps low-income individuals and families afford groceries. In Nevada, SNAP is administered by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services. SNAP aims to improve the nutrition and well-being of low-income individuals by increasing their access to healthy food options. The amount of benefits is based on factors such as household size, income, and expenses. Participants can use the benefits at authorized grocery stores and farmers' markets. For additional information, please visit <https://dwss.nv.gov/SNAP/Food-3-General-Information/>.

The **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children**, commonly known as **WIC**, is a federal assistance program that provides nutrition support to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, and young children. In Nevada, the program is administered by the Division of Public and Behavioral Health and services are provided through contracts with a wide range of community-based organizations throughout the state. The program serves pregnant and post-partum women, infants and children up to age five. Participants receive an electronic benefit card to purchase nutritious foods like milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and infant formula. WIC also provides nutrition education and healthcare referrals. For more information, please visit <https://nevadawic.org/>.

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program** is a federal assistance program that helps families care for dependent children in their own homes or in the homes of relative care-givers. TANF provides financial and support services such as child care, transportation and other services. TANF is administered by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, based on laws and regulations established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance. For more information, please visit [https://dwss.nv.gov/TANF/Financial\\_Help/](https://dwss.nv.gov/TANF/Financial_Help/).

