

# *Colorado Office of Early Childhood*



**COLORADO**  
Department of Human Services

## *History, Purpose, and Structure*

## *History*

Established in 2012 by Governor Hickenlooper. In 2013, HB-1117 further aligned programs.

- Colorado Department of Human Services
  - Child Care Licensing
  - Colorado Child Care Assistance Program
  - Child Care Quality Initiatives
  - Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
  - Early Intervention Colorado
  - Promoting Safe and Stable Families
  - Early Childhood Councils
- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
  - Nurse Home Visitor Program
  - Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program
  - Colorado Children's Trust Fund
  - Family Resource Center Program
- Lieutenant Governor's Office
  - Early Childhood Leadership Commission (reauthorized in 2013)
  - Head Start State Collaboration Office



## *Purpose*

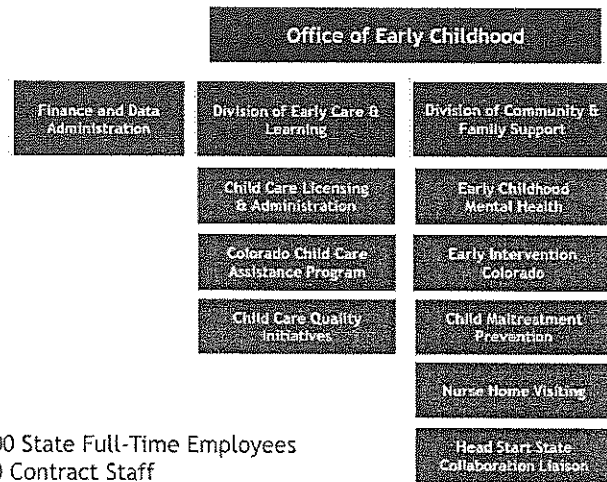
The Office of Early Childhood provides collaborative leadership to align resources for children, families, and early childhood professionals to best prepare Coloradoans for future success, through access to coordinated and quality early childhood programs and family supports.

Three Key Outcomes:

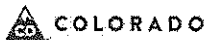
- School Readiness
- Safe, Stable and Nurturing
- Resilience in Early Childhood



## Structure



# *Division of Early Care and Learning*



## *Child Care Licensing & Administration*

- Responsible for inspecting, licensing and monitoring child care facilities statewide. Licensing specialists review staffing ratios, health and safety risks, background check compliance, qualifications, and children's files.
- Approximately 5,600 non-24 hour licensed facilities in Colorado.
- Licensing staff is a mix of State Full Time Employees and Contractors.



## *Child Care Licensing & Administration*

### Unit Highlights:

- In 2014, the State Legislature approved funding for 17 new contract licensing specialists and 3 new licensing supervisors to reduce caseloads and increase visit frequency.
- In 2015, the State Legislature approved funding for Micro Loans and Micro Grants to increase access and quality in "child care deserts."
- Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization requires annual licensing visits effective November 2016.



## *Colorado Child Care Assistance Program*

- In 2012-13, 204,029 children under the age of 12 were living at 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- Child Care Development Fund Block Grant funds (funding source for CCCAP) must be provided, subject to available appropriations, to children under the age of 13 at 130% of FPL or less.
- On any given day, CCCAP serves between 10,000 to 11,000 children.



## *Colorado Child Care Assistance Program*

### Program Highlights:

- HB 14-1317 Resulted in Historic Changes
  - Increased affordability of child care for low-income families
  - Eased burdens for working families
  - Cut red tape and provided new supports for child care providers
- SB 14-003 Cliff Effect Pilot Program
  - Ensures families impacted by the cliff effect continue to receive the child care they need while retaining employment.
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Reauthorization of 2014



## Child Care Quality Initiatives

- *Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant*  
\$44.8 million awarded in 2013 to accelerate the State's plan to improve quality early learning programs and school readiness for all children, particularly those children with high needs.
- *School Readiness Quality Improvement Program (SRQIP)*  
Improves the school readiness of children, ages 0-5, cared for at early care and education facilities in neighborhoods with low performing elementary schools.
- *Infant and Toddler Quality and Access Grant (ITQA)*  
Provides tiered reimbursement to high-quality early childhood programs, increases the number of low-income infants and toddlers served, and promotes parental involvement.



### Child Care Quality Initiatives

## Colorado Shines



### Quality Rating & Improvement System

- <10% of licensed Early Care and Education programs were participating in Quality Ratings and Quality Improvement Activities.
- Implemented in 2014, Colorado Shines assigns a quality rating to licensed early care and education programs, and continues to assess, improve and communicate the quality level of programs.
- 4,858 licensed child care programs participate.
- [www.ColoradoShines.com](http://www.ColoradoShines.com)



*Child Care Quality Initiatives*  
**Colorado Shines**



Professional Development Information System

- Launched statewide in April 2015. 3,200 professionals are registered in the system.
- One stop for all training and education information, from required annual training to professional advancement at all levels.
- Ability to track trends over time to evaluate early childhood workforce development and its role in impacting outcomes for children birth to 8.



*Child Care Quality Initiatives*

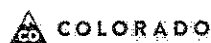
Unit Highlights:

- During SFY 14-15, \$6.8 million was distributed to child care providers to invest in quality. An additional \$8 million in Race to the Top funding will be invested in SFY 15-16.
- Achieved the Goal: Increase the number of children in CCCAP, under the age of five, in top tier quality rated facilities from 26.3% to 31%.

The Office currently reports 32.5% of children who receive CCCAP are enrolled in high quality rated programs. This number is anticipated to expand to over 40% within the next year as Colorado Shines grows.



## *Division of Community and Family Support*



### *Head Start State Collaboration Liaison*

- Head Start services promote school readiness, ensure families are ready to support their children's learning, and partner with schools and communities to support early education.
- Head Start serves 11,638 Colorado children and their families.
- In February 2015, Colorado was awarded four Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership grants. The grants provide \$6,121,537 per year for five years, totaling \$30,607,685, to serve 420 infants and toddlers.





## *Early Childhood Mental Health*

- The Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist (ECMHS) program increases the availability of mental health services to young children aged 0-5. Program services include:
  - Developmental Screening
  - Developmental Assessment/Evaluation
  - Consultation
  - Parent Services
  - Kindergarten Readiness
- There is one Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist based out of each of the 17 Community Mental Health Centers across Colorado.



## *Early Intervention Colorado*

- Provides supports and services to children ages 0-2 who have developmental delays or disabilities and their families.
- EI Colorado contracts with 20 Community Centered Boards (CCBs) to provide early intervention services and service coordination.
- Services are provided at no cost to families and are funded through a Coordinated System of Payment that includes: private health insurance, Medicaid, local funds, State General Fund and Federal Part C of IDEA.



## *Child Maltreatment Prevention*

- *Colorado Community Response*  
Offers supports to families at risk of entering the child welfare system.
- *SafeCare Colorado*  
A voluntary, in-home parent education program that provides direct skills training in an effort to prevent entry or re-entry to the child welfare system.
- *Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)*  
Prevents the unnecessary separation of children from their families and ensures permanency by reuniting children with their parents through adoption or another permanent living arrangement.
- *Children's Trust Fund*



## *Home Visiting*

- *Nurse Home Visitor Program*  
Transforms lives through improved pregnancy outcomes, promotion of child health and development, and the encouragement of economic self-sufficiency for families.
- *Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV)*  
Builds upon scientific research which shows that home visits by a nurse, social worker or early childhood educator during pregnancy and in the first years of life improves child and family outcomes.



## *Early Childhood Leadership Commission*

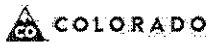


## *Early Childhood Leadership Commission*

- Reauthorized by H.B. 13-1117 to:
  - Identify opportunities, barriers and gaps in services and programs that support young children.
  - Develop strategies and monitor efforts related to: quality early learning, professional development, school readiness, and access to child care.
  - Assist public and private entities in coordinating efforts on behalf of pregnant women and young children.



# *Looking Ahead*



## *Quality Investments*

- In 2015, the Office engaged stakeholders to review current quality investments and discuss opportunities for future investment of the federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).
- In Summer 2015, the Office will host meetings across the state to test "themes" and discuss how they translate into real investments.
- Goal is to ensure the Office is able make CCDF quality investments in a prudent and meaningful way, maximizing our impact on children and families statewide.

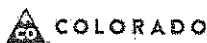


## *Two Generation Strategies*

- The Office of Early Childhood will continue to collaborate with other agencies to promote a two-generation approach to program and service delivery.
- Three priorities shape Colorado's two-generation approach
  - Families achieve self-sufficiency through work
  - Wealth is achieved through financial literacy
  - Children achieve through early learning



*Questions?*



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