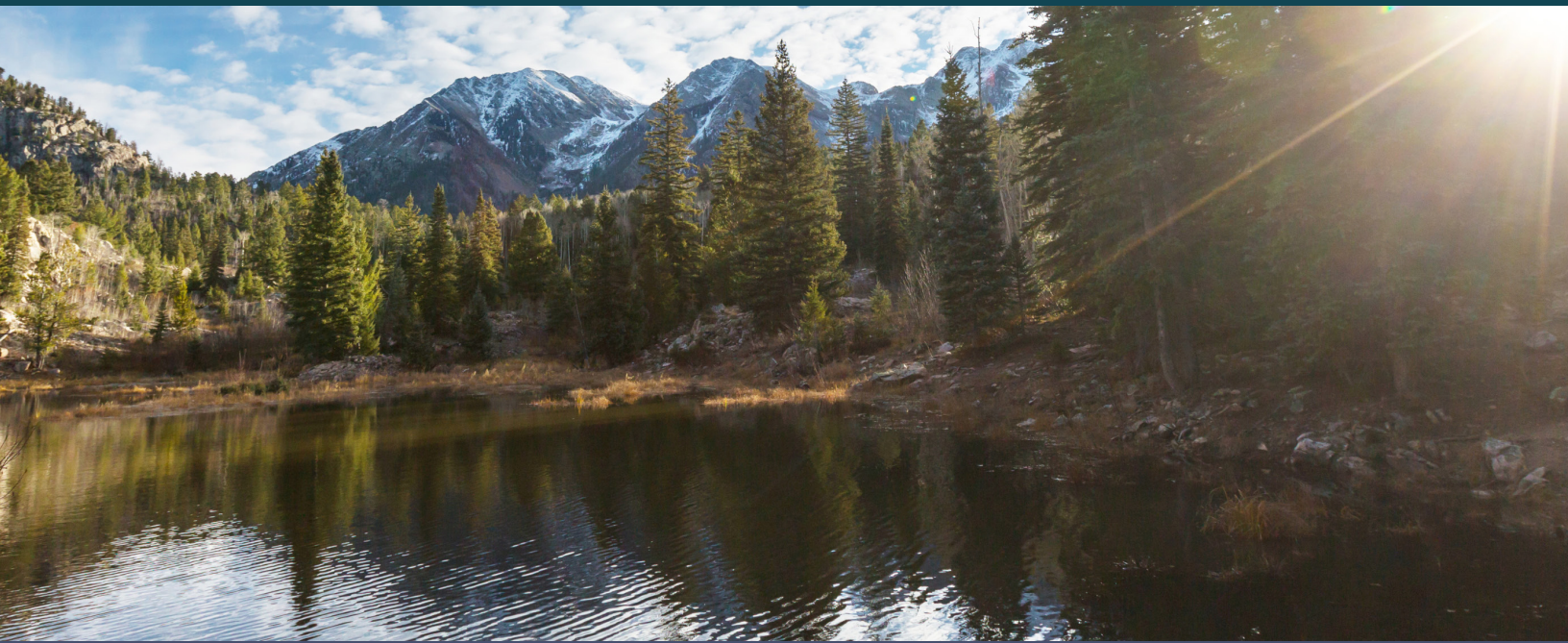


# HEALTHY *child* *care* COLORADO

## Building Healthy Futures Together 2021-2022 Annual Impact Report



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

2246 Irving Street | Denver, Colorado | 80211

# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Partners,

Here we are, about to wrap up another year of incredible work on behalf of children, families, and early childhood professionals in Colorado. As I reflect on this past year, the theme that is top of mind for me is that we truly are Building Healthy Futures TOGETHER. It might sound simple, but Colorado has experienced some of the most significant policy advancements for young children in our history, and we understand the deep effort it takes from so many people and organizations to move these things forward. With a new Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) and the forthcoming rollout of Universal Preschool (UPK) for all Colorado 4-year olds who choose it, we are seeing so much growth and opportunity to ensure physical and mental health remain a vital part of child care.



If you remember our [Annual Impact Report from last year](#), it included images of a community garden with many big (and little!) hands planting seeds and tending to young plants. In 2022 we are now seeing a burgeoning garden with vines stretching across bodies of work and more gardeners to care for the plants. It is also clear that for our community garden to truly thrive, it takes collaboration, digging deeper into the hard questions, creating pathways for engagement and inclusion of diverse voices, and intentional strategic plans that will lead us toward sustainability.

Each of the HCCC garden beds has seen growth and impact this year with major progress that supports our mission to build safe, supportive, and healthy early childhood settings and systems. We received two CIRCLE Grants supporting the expansion of our Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Recognition and Child Care Health Consultation systems building work. Our Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Network Hub is getting off the ground thanks to the Advisory Team and our public-private partnership with the CDEC and philanthropic funders. We also have 28 newly certified Pyramid Model Facilitators already doing their work in communities.

In addition, we were deeply engaged in the process to conceptualize and establish UPK and the CDEC through our participation in multiple meetings with legislators, Early Childhood Leadership Commission workgroups, and engaging in advocacy during the legislative session. We look forward to the work to come to ensure health remains a priority as UPK and other policy and program advancements move forward.

With Gratitude,  
Taran M. Schneider, MA  
Executive Director

## About Healthy Child Care Colorado

The mission of HCCC is to build safe, supportive, and healthy early childhood settings and systems where children and professionals learn and grow.



Obesity  
Prevention



Social & Emotional  
Well-Being



Oral  
Health



Injury  
Prevention





# Snapshot of Impact

406,097  
children  
impacted

113 events | 2,958 participants



51 counties

*"The Onboarding Learning Community made the process (of starting in this new role) not seem so lonely because there are no other consultants in my area to work with or shadow. It was a safe place to ask questions and I never felt like any questions or concerns were off limits."*

– ECMHC Onboarding Learning Community Participant

We fielded **7,855**  
technical assistance  
requests



covering **all 64**  
counties



**871 hours**  
of time contributed by  
**125**  
volunteers



HCCC has been more active in advocacy efforts than ever before with appointments to key workgroups to support Universal Preschool rollout.

We engaged in

**5 PRESENTATIONS OF**

**TESTIMONY &**

**SIGNED 7 LETTERS**

commenting on legislation

# Mission Strategies

## Network Hubs

HCCC serves as a network hub for three unique consultative roles in our state. A network hub has the power to strengthen connections, resources, policies, and practices for consultative roles to ensure children, families, and early childhood professionals can thrive. Our role supporting multiple network hubs ensures alignment across physical and mental health along with early learning and development. By providing a central source for training, professional development, peer support, and more, our work makes a major impact on supporting our early childhood workforce.

Consultation is a vital element of supporting Colorado's early childhood system to ensure quality and strong relationships between children and the adults who care for them.

## Child Care Health Consultation Network Hub



HCCC has been the hub for Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) for 20 years, and the importance of health in child care has been underscored as the pandemic continues. CCHCs play an important role in supporting health and safety in child care, including ensuring early childhood professionals have training and support. Key impacts include:

**Leadership in Building Partnerships:** We have continued to nurture strong partnerships with key state agencies to support and be responsive to programs and consultants through the pandemic.

**Exploring Equitable Access:** We have an opportunity to make progress toward ensuring there is equitable access to high-quality health consultation services across Colorado as we have been awarded a Community Innovation and Resiliency for Care and Learning Equity (CIRCLE) Grant. Ensuring children with special health needs are successfully included in child care settings is one of the most important steps we can take to build a system where children are valued, healthy, and thriving. This project will examine the successes, challenges, and barriers to the current system of health consultation in our state as well as examining other state systems. We will create recommendations for improvements that Colorado can make to ensure equitable access to consultation and inclusion of all children in child care settings.

*"As we continue to navigate the global pandemic, now is the time to identify and understand the inequities embedded in the current system of Child Care Health Consultation. We must get clear on the opportunities to improve this system to ensure it meets the needs of the child care programs, families, and children who are directly impacted. We look forward to partnering with HCCC on this critical systems-building project."*

Mary Alice Cohen, Deputy Executive Director at the Colorado Department of Early Childhood

## Impact for Professionals

### Ensuring and Updating Best Practices and Policies:

HCCC supported updates to key documents and rules ensuring health and safety in child care. Updates to Child Care Center rules went into effect in December 2021, and they include new training requirements for CCHCs and formally allow teleconsultation visits, which are vital as the pandemic continues. HCCC also partnered with the Colorado Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to update Colorado's general health appraisal used in child care programs and Head Start.

*"HCCC has been both an anchor and a life raft and I've loved working with you in my role as a rural Child Care Health Consultant. I don't know how you do all the work you do on so many levels and with so many facets, and always with a smile and friendly, open manner - you are simply amazing! All the best to the wonderful team at HCCC!"*  
– CCHC & Local Public Health Department Staff

## Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Network Hub



Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an evidence-based approach supporting healthy social and emotional development and mental health for young children and their caregivers. [HCCC is now the hub for ECMH consultants in Colorado](#) and we have made significant progress in getting this new hub off the ground. Key impacts include:

### HCCC was awarded the Colorado Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations Program

**Intermediary:** This includes direct support for and contributes to primary activities of the state-administered ECMHC Program. HCCC will provide comprehensive training support and technical assistance to Colorado's ECMHC workforce, along with data collection, reporting, and quality improvement with Colorado ECMH sites. Additionally, HCCC will assist in providing technical assistance to Colorado-based organizations designed to expand existing sites and community support, as well as support in the development of new sites in the state.

**Developed and implemented an Onboarding Learning Community:** Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation can be challenging and often isolating, especially for those new to the field or a position. To create a sense of belonging, community, and shared learning, HCCC piloted our first cohort of the Onboarding Learning Community in September 2021 and have successfully supported two additional cohorts with continuation into FY 22-23. This optional cohort is offered to newly onboarded ECMHCs across the state, regardless of funding source.



*"It has been a pleasure to work with the HCCC team as we coordinate strategies to elevate health and well-being benefiting children, families, and the workforce. Through CARES stimulus, workforce activities, Pyramid Colorado, and the ECMHC*

*Network Hub Advisory Team, this growing public-*

*private partnership stands to impact children, families, and professionals across our state."* – Heather Craiglow, Colorado Department of Early Childhood



*"I appreciate all I am learning from each of you during this process of growth and discovery. It is an uplifting experience which motivated me to gain my endorsement in Infant Mental Health and I will continue to be a stronger advocate in any role I get to play for the benefit of children and families! I am grateful for each of you!!!"* – Ty Johnson, ECMHC Network Hub Advisory Team Member



### Created Issue Briefs to Elevate the Workforce:

This set of issue briefs was developed in partnership with Colorado Department of Early Childhood, ECE Insights, Miles Consulting, and Davidson Consulting:

1. [COVID-19 Responsiveness: Use of CARES Act Federal Stimulus Funds](#)
2. [Voices from the Field](#)
3. [Workforce Competency Alignment](#)
4. [Voices from the Field 2](#)



## Pyramid Network Hub



HCCC has served as the Network Hub for Pyramid Model implementation since 2020, supporting healthy social emotional development for children. The growth of the Pyramid Network Hub has been substantial as we have launched our State Leadership Team, completed the first Pyramid Facilitator Certification, and made steps toward systems alignment and integration. Key impacts include:

**Launch of State Leadership Team:** We utilized an open nomination process and received 36 nominations for individuals to serve on the team and work collaboratively to provide insight, context, expertise, and guidance to HCCC on matters of programming, research and evaluation, opportunities, funding, and systems alignment. The team ensures that Pyramid-related efforts maintain relevance, meaning, and utility in local, state, and national contexts. We ensured representation from both policy and systems perspectives as well as program and implementation perspectives on this team.

**Facilitator Certification:** We are pleased to have supported the first cohort of 28 individuals for Pyramid Facilitator Certification. The Facilitators are already engaging in efforts on the ground in communities, creating tools that meet their specific community needs, including Pyramid Model kits, leading trainings, deploying coaching and observations, and building awareness. You can find Pyramid Facilitators easily through our website. A diverse group of 25 candidates were selected to participate in cohort 2 of the Pyramid Facilitator Certification.



*"I cannot help but to feel grateful to know and grow with such a wonderful group of people, who come from all walks and parts of the state, but share a passion, and on top of all of that, are just 'good people,' so kind-hearted, and collaborative to boot!"*  
– ECMH Consultant & Pyramid Facilitator

**Systems Alignment & Integration:** The 45-hour Pyramid training content is now recognized in the Professional Development Information System (PDIS) as a Training of Special Recognition, which means successful completions do not expire in the Early Childhood Professional Credential 3.0. We partnered with the Colorado Department of Early Childhood to create a Pyramid Training Badge in the PDIS. We reviewed several years of training completion data and awarded this badge to more than 2,300 early childhood professionals.

For many years, Colorado has not had access to the [Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale \(TPITOS\)](#). This observation tool is a critical element that measures fidelity, guides coaching, and promotes continuous quality improvement in infant and toddler settings. We now have 3 TPITOS Master Trainers and 30 TPITOS Reliable Observers throughout the state.

**Colorado Pyramid Institute & Champion Award:** We hosted the first Colorado Pyramid Institute for nearly 100 participants from across the state. We partnered with the State Leadership Team to create the Colorado Pyramid Model Champion Award, and the first award was presented to Patricia Matus-Amut.



Our quality initiatives promote and support practices and policies focused on social and emotional well-being, obesity prevention, oral health, and injury prevention.

We are celebrating two major accomplishments in our Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care work:

- **Alignment:** Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Recognition has been included in the new Colorado Shines Point Structure Guide and we developed a partnership to reach Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) child care providers.
- **Expansion:** We received a Community Innovation and Resiliency for Care and Learning Equity (CIRCLE) Grant to expand the reach of the BFCC Recognition across the state.



**Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care:**

Our [Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Recognition](#) focuses on supporting the health of infants and toddlers by ensuring child care programs have breastfeeding-friendly policies and practices embedded within their physical space, program guidelines, and educational materials. This recognition provides programs with a BFCC Advisor to help them assess and improve policies and practices that contribute to creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment and culture. This project ultimately impacts infants, toddlers, families, and program staff by honoring and supporting family choice related to their child's nutrition and promoting attachment, bonding, and inclusion.



12 programs  
5 counties



Circle Grant

*"This grant allows us to build upon the strong collaboration and public-private partnerships we have cultivated over the past five years to develop Colorado's first statewide Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Recognition program. We're excited to expand this work over the next year to support even more formal and informal child care programs to achieve this recognition."*

– Taran Schneider, Executive Director at Healthy Child Care Colorado

**Oral Health:** We continue to offer fun and interactive trainings connected to oral health at no cost to participants. We implement Cavity Free Kids, host Healthy Smiles Summits, and train Healthy Smiles Champions who support programs to implement the Cavity Free Kids curriculum, daily toothbrushing, and develop oral health friendly policies.

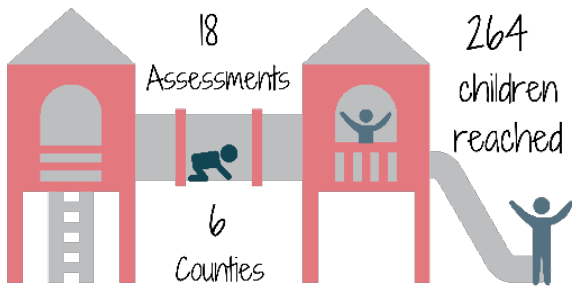
We trained 125 professionals who serve more than 5,000 children



### Impact for Professionals

*"I worked with a teacher who had a 4 year old in her class with significant oral health issues and his parents shared that it was a daily struggle to get him to brush his teeth. I'm glad to report that this child now happily brushes his teeth at child care and at home every day!" – Healthy Smiles Champion*

**Playground Safety:** We offer various assessments to early childhood programs that support training and recommendations for safe playgrounds. These include our Certified Playground Safety Inspection (CPSI), and the Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale (POEMS).



HCCC continues to step into leadership roles that impact policy advancement and implementation throughout Colorado, and this year included some of the most major policy advancements serving young children Colorado has ever seen. Early childhood partners throughout the state have spent the past year building the foundation for the rollout of Universal Preschool after Colorado voters passed Proposition EE in 2020. With rollout beginning in 2023, the 2022 legislative session included the development of the new Colorado Department of Early Childhood. HCCC was at the forefront of this work with appointment to the Special Education Subcommittee, membership on the Universal Preschool, Early Childhood Workforce Development, and Program Quality and Alignment Subcommittees.

We served on the Advisory Committee to create Colorado's first Roadmap for Early Childhood Oral Health Equity to advance integrated and preventive oral health in our early childhood systems.

HCCC was also deeply involved in drafting the new Child Care Center Licensing Rules that went into effect in December 2021 in addition to participating in the Outdoor Rules committee working to create a licensing regulation pilot for outdoor programs.



# Recognition



## Building Healthy Futures Awards

Healthy Child Care Colorado's annual Building Healthy Futures Awards are an opportunity for us to recognize truly outstanding partners and advocates. These incredible individuals have demonstrated a strong commitment to building safe, supportive, and healthy early childhood settings and systems in Colorado. Please join us in congratulating them on their well-deserved recognition!



### *Lisa Matter, Colorado Department of Early Childhood*

Lisa's passion for the early childhood field and her collaborative leadership approach makes her an incredible partner. We are so grateful for her engagement and guidance on the Pyramid State Transition Team and Leadership Team as well as the Whole Child Consultative Roles Conference Steering Committee. Lisa's passion for the humans doing the hard work, and the ability to model the values at the very foundation of our work are all part of what makes her successful and impactful across the state.



### *Bill Jaeger, LOR Foundation*

Bill's exemplary leadership in coordinating cross-sector efforts to create stronger policies, systems, and infrastructure in early childhood has been nothing short of incredible. His approach to this work brings expertise, collaboration, and always has children and families at the center. He has been a steadfast champion and we are grateful for his strong leadership and dedication to making our collective work as impactful as possible over these past several years.



### *Jamie D'Amico, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment*

Jamie's incredible knowledgeable and unwavering support of early childhood vaccination practices and policies has been tremendous throughout her career. She has been an engaged and trusted champion, supporting Child Care Health Consultants and early childhood programs with vaccinations, applying state guidance, and mandates to this unique role and setting. Her strong leadership is part of what makes this work successful and impactful across the state.

# Our Team

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Allergy Safe Kids

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