



Social Impact Consultants

Discovering better ways
to solve social problems

The Value of Early Childhood Indicators: Guiding Action

A conversation with:

- **Hallie Preskill**, Managing Director, *FSG*
- **Kyle Snow**, Senior Scholar & Director, *National Association for the Education of Young Children*
- **Linda Sullivan-Dudzic**, Special Programs Director, *Bremerton School District*
- **Donna Haig Friedman**, Evaluator, *Thrive in 5*

May 15, 2013

Today's Agenda

- I. The Time Is Now: The Importance of Early Learning Indicators**
Hallie Preskill, FSG
- II. Expert Response**
Kyle Snow, National Association for the Education of Young Children
- III. Indicators in Action**
Linda Sullivan-Dudzic, Bremerton School District
Donna Haig Friedman, Thrive in 5
- IV. Audience Questions & Answers**
- V. Wrap-up**

The Time Is Now

Attention on Early Learning Is Growing

The Country's Demographics Are Changing

The Early Learning Field Is Evolving

“Whole Child” development across a range of domains is increasingly seen as key to school readiness

With Support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, FSG Worked to Develop and Vet a Set of Early Learning Indicators

Process

- **Interviewed 40 Early Childhood Education experts** in the field and assessed 1,100+ indicators from 11 sets of indicators
- **Vetted list** of indicators with more than **2 dozen experts**
- Wrote a **report that frames whole child development from 0-8 as foundational to academic and career success**



Product

- **3 Frames**
 - **Early childhood ecosystem, continuum of development from 0 to 8**
 - **Racial equity**
 - **Profiles examples of using indicators to make connections**
- **48 Indicators & Emerging Themes**
- **2 Examples of Indicators in Action**
 - **P-3 Partnership, Bremerton**
 - **Thrive in 5, Boston**

Whole Child Development Is Multi-Dimensional & Affected by Various Layers of the Early Childhood System

Developmental Domains

Socio-
Emotional
Development

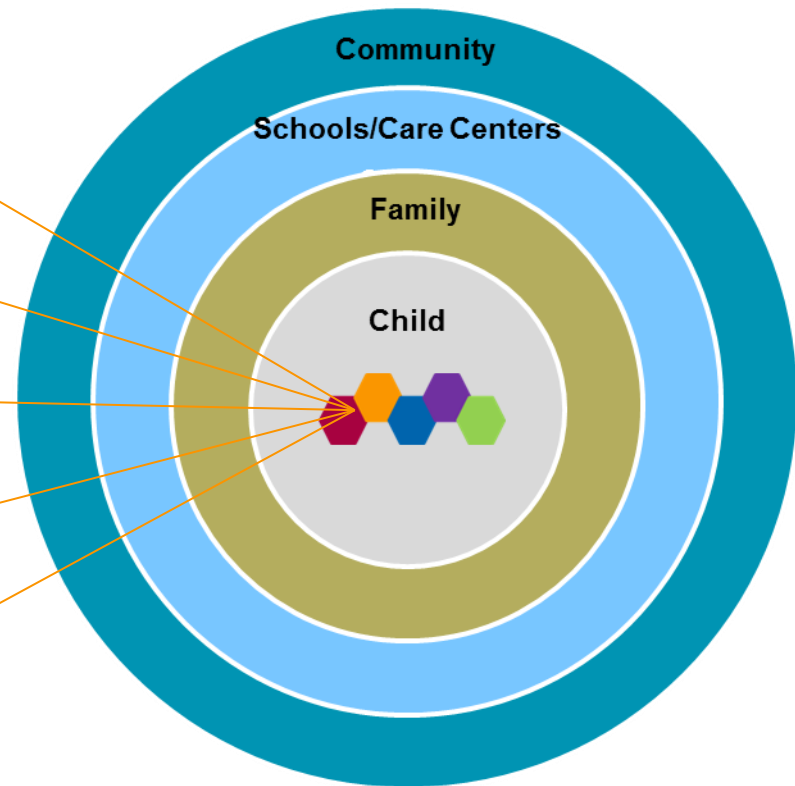
Cognitive
Development

Language
Development
& Literacy

Approaches
to Learning

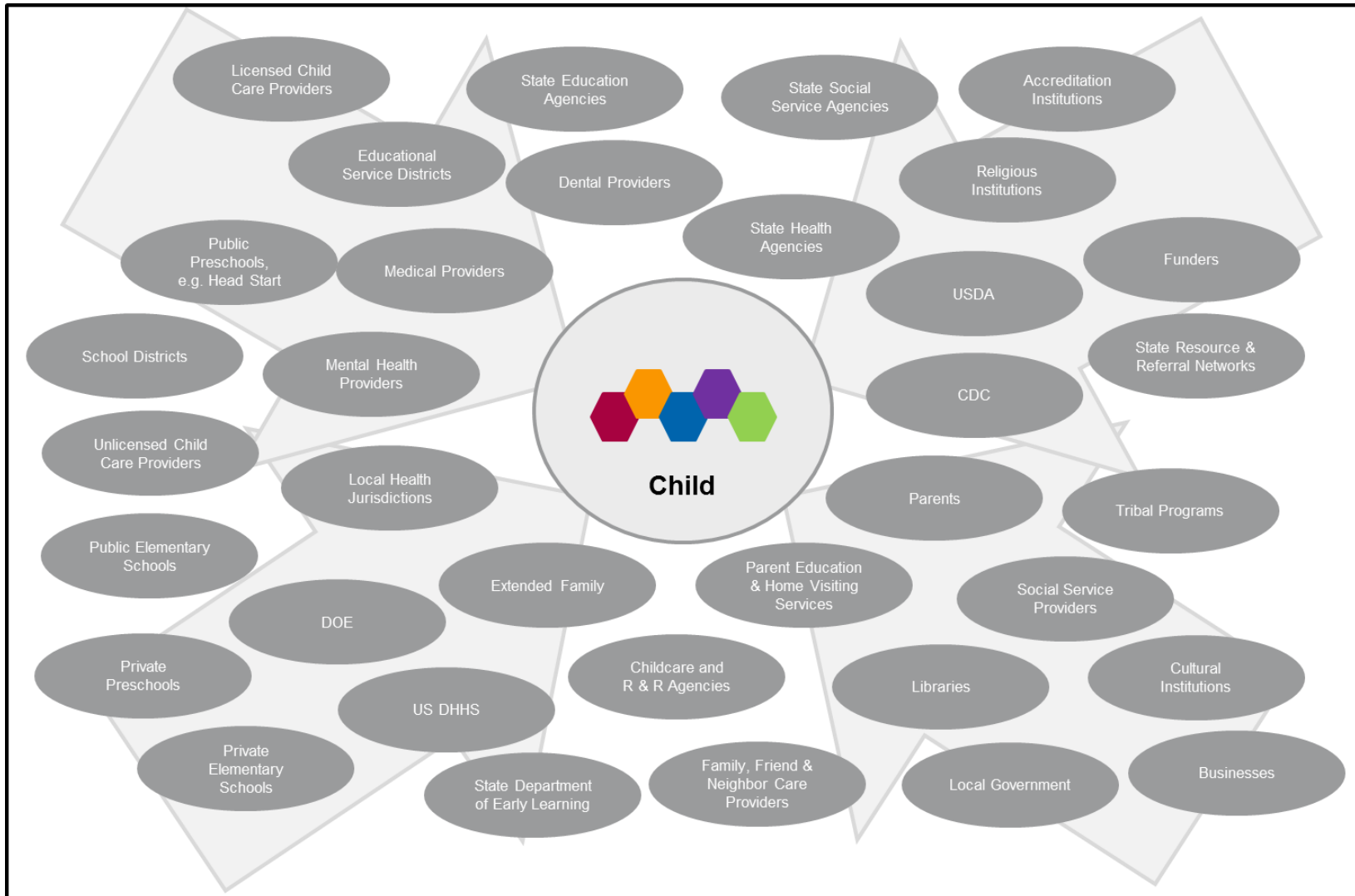
Physical
Development

Layers of Early Childhood System¹

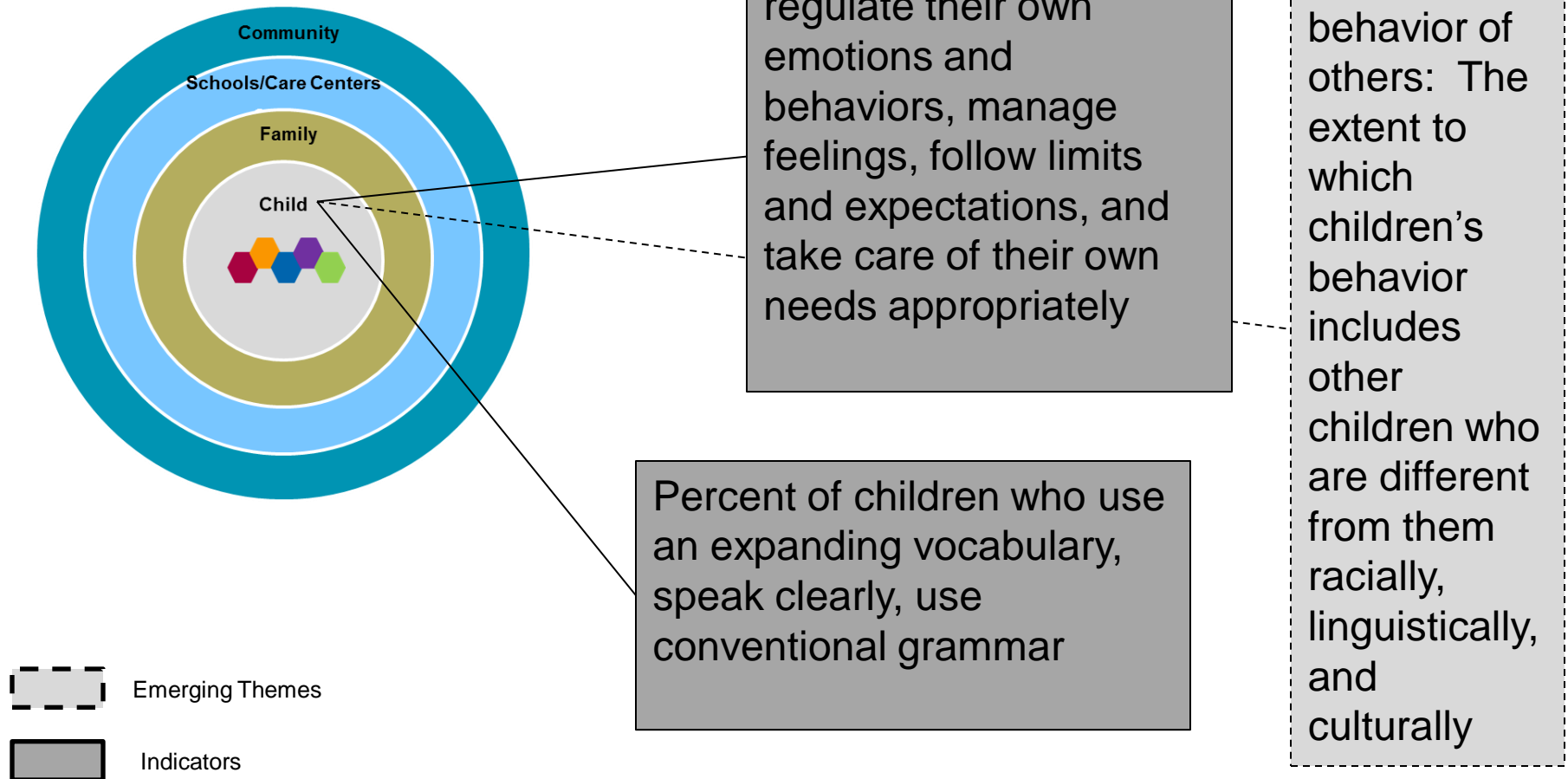


1. Bronfenbrenner, Urie. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

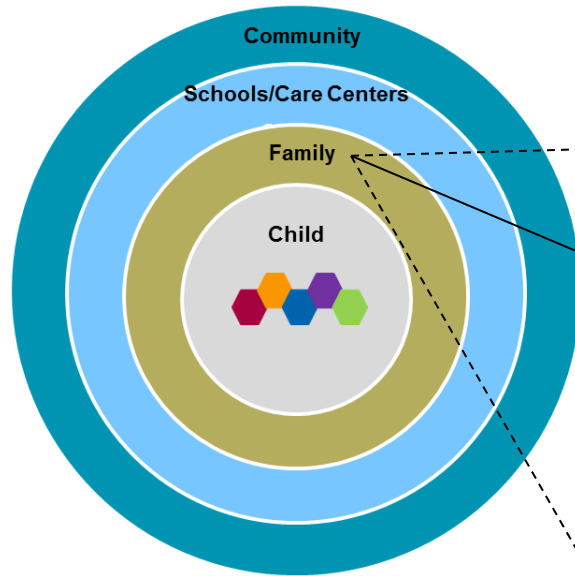
Indicators Reflect the Complexity of the Early Childhood System Which Includes a Wide Range of Different Actors



Indicators of Whole Child Development Are Represented across Domains & Systems



Healthy Development Is Directly Affected by Family Environment & Family Supports



Family, parental levels of chronic stress: Family conditions such as parents or guardians working multiple jobs, absence of a partner, or absence of a social network for extended periods of time

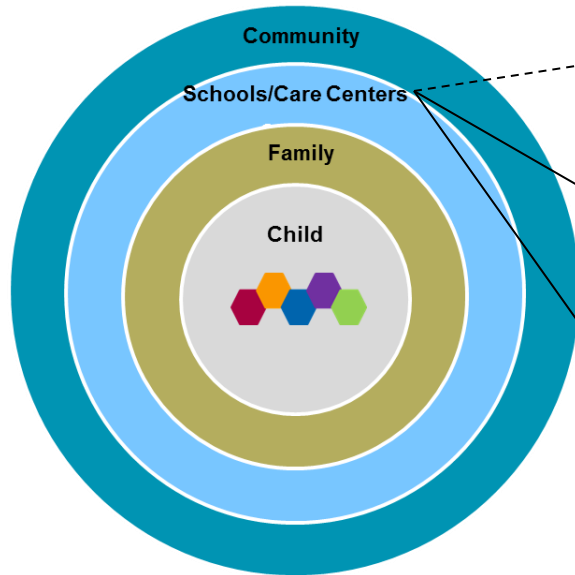
Family, parenting of children in culturally appropriate ways: Parents' or guardians' beliefs and behaviors with children regarding respect, obedience, and participation in social and educational activities; parents' expectations and behaviors according to a child's gender

Percent of children living in families with income below the federal poverty threshold

 Emerging Themes

 Indicators

Schools' & Care Centers' Approaches to Learning Are Pivotal in the Socialization & Education of Children



Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care workforce characteristics, backgrounds: Care providers and teachers' racial and ethnic background and ability to speak in a child's home language and to engage with family and community members of children whom they are serving

Percent of care and education centers that provide children opportunities to develop a sense of competence and positive attitudes toward learning, such as persistence, engagement, curiosity, and mastery

Percent of early childhood teachers with a bachelor's degree and specialized training in early childhood

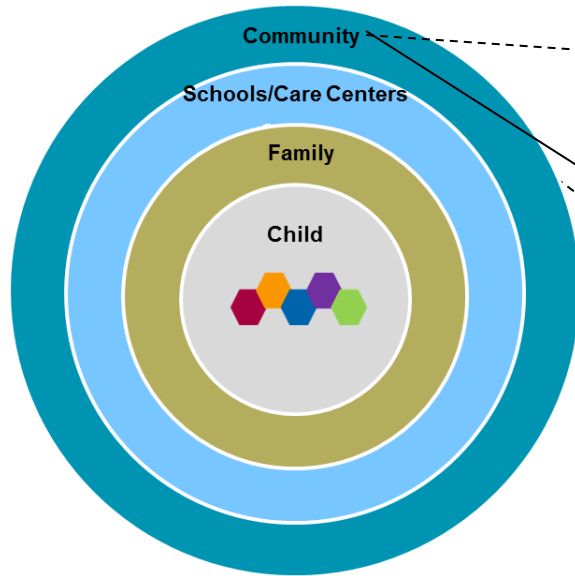


Emerging Themes



Indicators

Communities & Neighborhoods Affect Early Childhood Development



Neighborhood stability: The percentages of a neighborhood's home ownership, lease to purchases, and long-term rental agreements

Percent of children living in a neighborhood in which more than 20% of the population lives in poverty

Community and neighborhood safety: The extent to which acts of violence occur within a neighborhood or community



Emerging Themes



Indicators

Expert Response from NAEYC's Kyle Snow



**Senior Scholar & Director,
Center for Applied Research**
*National Association for the Education
of Young Children*

A Frame of Reference

NAEYC Background

- NAEYC is the nation's **leading voice for high quality early childhood education** for children birth through age 8
- Center for Applied Research **focuses on ensuring that research and data join the dialogue about best practices and policies** to support early childhood education

Core NAEYC Views Related to Indicators and Assessment:

- Focus on **multiple domains of child development**
- Program Standards **capture breadth of quality indicators**
- Recognition of **cultural diversity**
- Focus on **equity of opportunity for all children**



Research Policy Practice

Training in child development within the bio-ecological (Bronfenbrenner) model

The Current Early Childhood Landscape

Policy

- **Multiple federal and state initiatives** related to early childhood
- **Indicators** of child well-being and development are **driven by international efforts**

Ideas

- **Current focus on child outcomes and programmatic quality**
- Most models are **linear, and one-dimensional**

Indicators highlight a common set of benchmarks that can be used at scale to provide a broad assessment of how well we meet the needs of children

Why This Work Matters

Inclusive, Rigorous Process

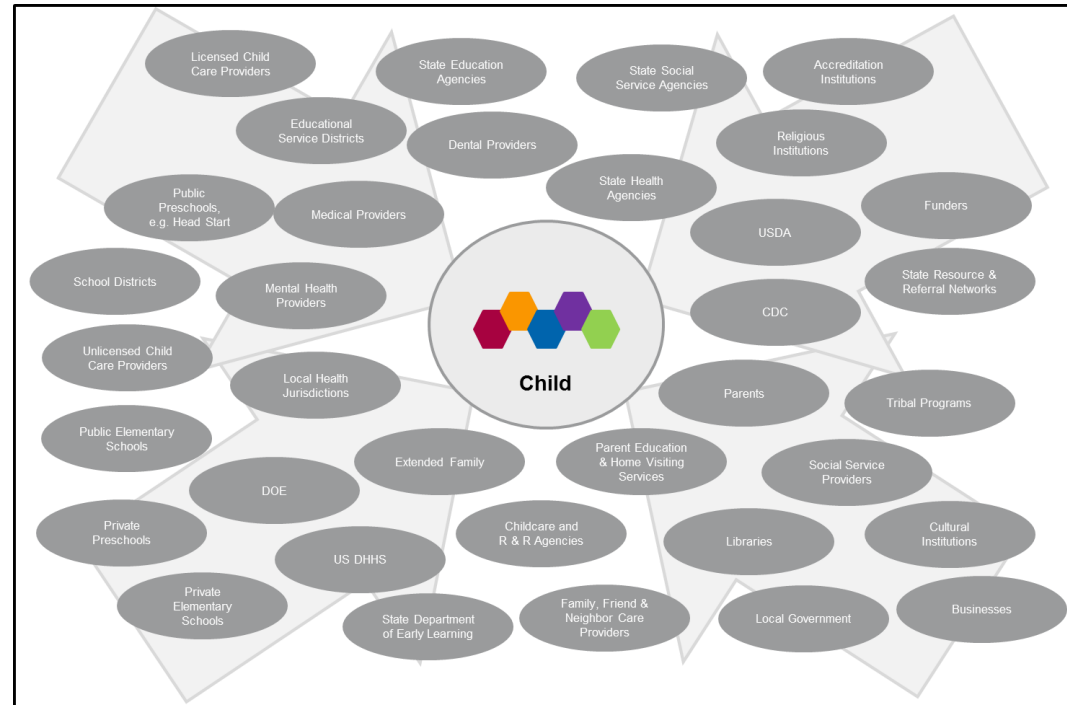
- Extensive **review of the literature** to generate potential indicators
- **Expert review and feedback**

Relevant Product

- A **Systems Lens**
 - **Reflects the layers of the early childhood development ecosystem** (families, educators, communities) in the 0-8 continuum
 - Provides a **focus on the whole child**
- Includes **indicators related to racial and cultural disparities**
- Powerful indicators that **create targets of action for change across systems**
- Highlights **starting with what you want to know** not what you can measure is **key to successful utility of indicators**

The Value of Early Learning Indicators Is in Their Use to Foster Communication & Collaboration

- **Common language for describing the development of young children**
- **Platform for collaboration**
- **Enable alignment across actors**



Early Childhood System

Bremerton School District P-3 Partnership



Linda Sullivan-Dudzic
Special Programs Director
Bremerton School District

Bremerton School District Used Indicators to Identify How to Use Additional State Funding

- **Bremerton School District**
 - 5,000 students; 6 Elementary Title I schools ranging from 52%-80% FRL
- **Initiative 728 Student Achievement Dollars**
 - Inventory & Indicators
- **Only 4% of our children enter kindergarten with early literacy skills!**



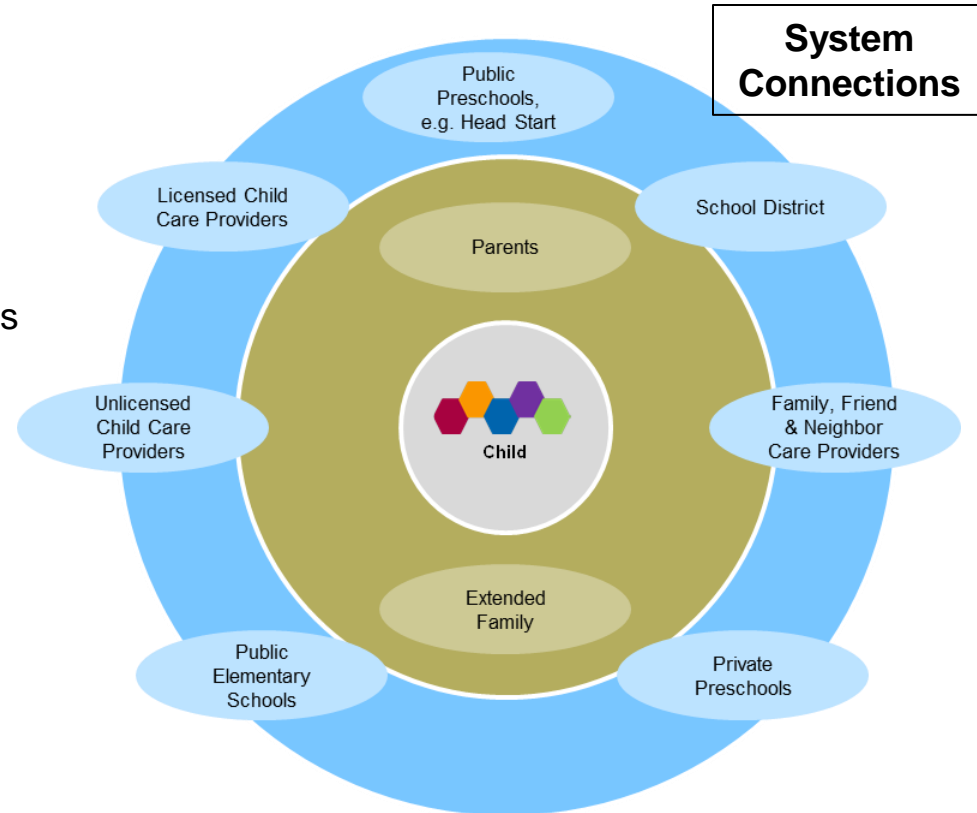
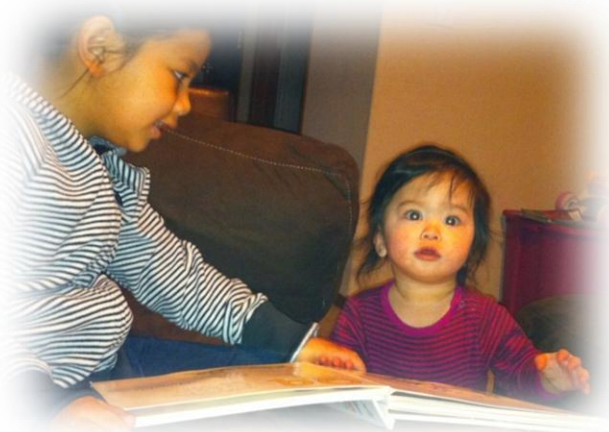
This collaboration focuses on indicators of early literacy in addition to social-emotional development and early math skills

Bremerton School District & Its Community Partners Use Indicators to Improve Early Literacy

Approach

Established a P-3 Leadership Team

- Set goals
- Use of research, indicators and data to
 - Celebrate & build on success
 - Adjust and align instructional practices
 - Align support services



Key Indicators:

- *Percent of children recognizing the relationships between letters and sounds at kindergarten entry*
- *Percent of children who use an expanding vocabulary, speak clearly, use conventional grammar*
- *Socio-Emotional & Early Math Indicators*

The Bremerton Partnership Has Created Significant Gains for Early Literacy & Has Had Influence across Washington State

Accolades:

- WA State Award for Closing the Achievement Gap
- 2010 Naval Ave. P-3 Early Learning Center
- 2011 View Ridge Elementary (P-5)



Naval Ave. Early Learning Center



Impact:

- Boeing Preschool S.T.E.M Grant
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation & OSPI Lighthouse Grant to train others
- Significant Gains in literacy & math foundational skills!

Children demonstrating early literacy skills grew from 4% to 52% across student groups and persistent achievement gaps

Boston's Thrive in 5 Initiative



Donna Haig Friedman

Evaluator, Thrive in 5 Initiative

*Director, Center for Social Policy &
Research at J. W. McCormack
Graduate School of Policy & Global
Studies*

Thrive in 5 Supports the Diverse and Vibrant Community of Boston

- 625,000 people; “**majority minority**” city
- **Over 38,000 children five and under, 27% live in poverty**, significant achievement gaps for low income children
- School Readiness Call to Action by Mayor and United Way of Mass Bay
- ***Thrive in 5: “Boston’s Promise to Its Children”***
- Extensive **cross-sector planning** resulted in Boston’s School Readiness Roadmap

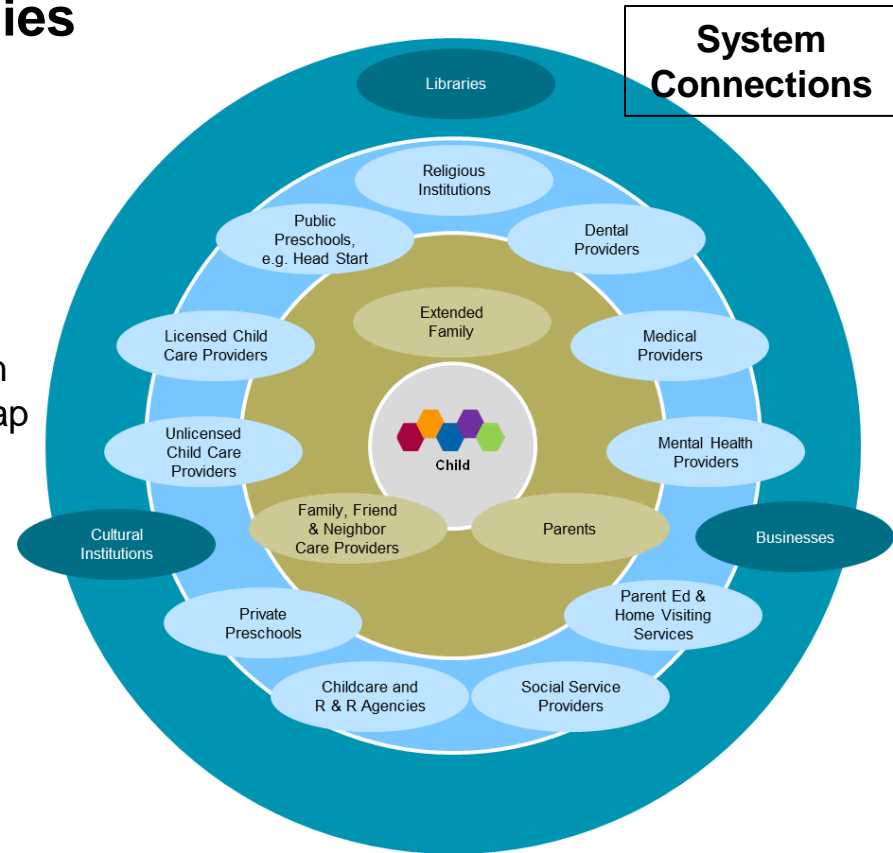


Low-income and minority children are a major focus of the Thrive in 5 Initiative

Boston Children Thrive Uses Indicators to Identify & Support Target Families

Approach

- **Thrive in 5**, the backbone organization
- **Goal:** 100% of Boston's children ready for kindergarten success by 2018
- **Mapping of communities** whose young children are most at risk of falling into the achievement gap (5 neighborhoods)
- **Program theory elements:**
 - Alignment
 - Positive, culturally responsive family engagement
 - Parent leadership
 - Membership model
- **Learning from results to inform strategy**



Key Indicators & Emerging Concepts:

- Percent of Families living in poverty
- Family & Parental access to resources
- Family Isolation/Chronic stress

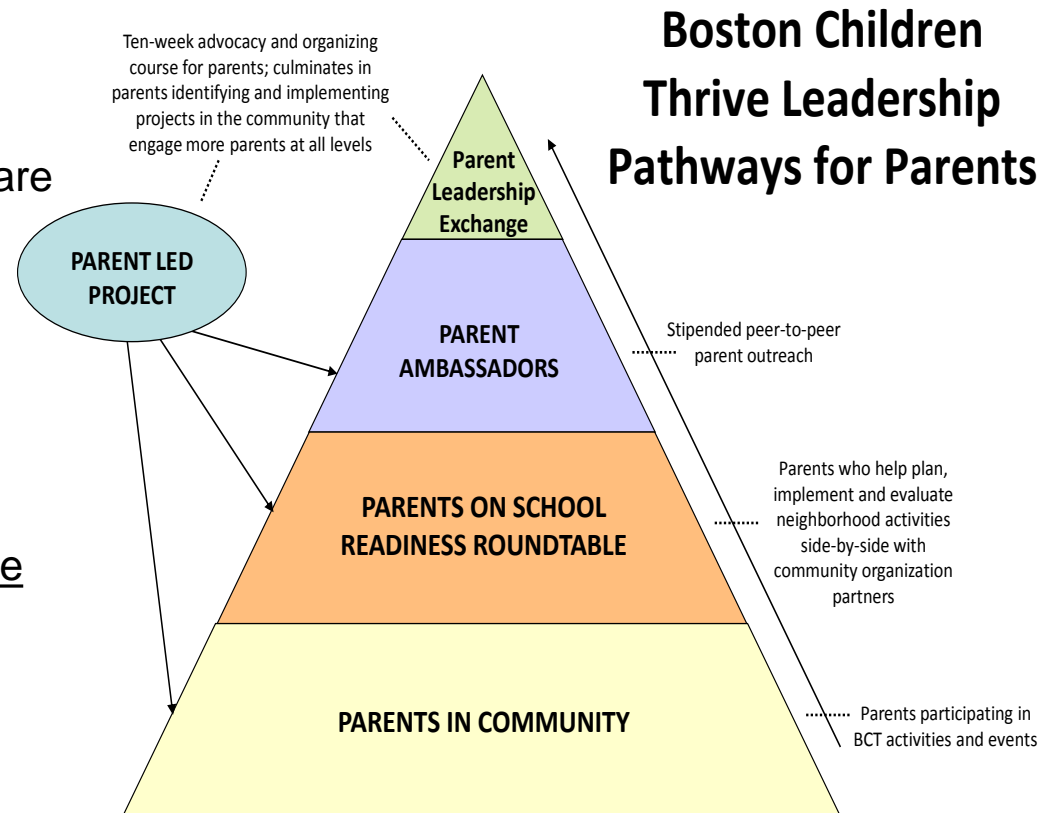
BCT brings actors together to work collaboratively toward school readiness for all kids

BCT Has Seen Increases in Service Access and Expanded Neighborhood Reach

1. Reach:

- **24%** of children living in poverty in 5 neighborhoods are enrolled in BCT
- **3,343** adult caregivers enrolled, 206% of 15 month target
- **85** informal caregivers enrolled, 80% of target

2. Evolution of Boston Children Thrive Leadership Pathway for Parents



Moving forward BCT will focus on systems change and documenting impacts on children and families

Audience Questions

Hallie Preskill
FSG



Linda Sullivan-Dudzic
Bremerton School
District



Kyle Snow
National Association
for the Education for
Young Children



Donna Haig Friedman
University of
Massachusetts,
Boston



Thank You!

- **Thank you** for joining in the conversation today
- Please fill in the **brief electronic survey** that you'll receive after today's event to share your feedback with us
- The report will be released this summer
- To access the **recording** and to **download the slides** from today's webinar, please visit:
www.fsg.org/earlychildhoodindicators
- Panelists will be answering additional questions on our Strategic Evaluation blog:
www.fsg.org/KnowledgeExchange/Blogs/StrategicEvaluation.aspx
- For more information, please visit us at www.fsg.org or contact info@fsg.org



Indicators

- Percent of infants born weighing more than 5.5 pounds
- Percent of children with health insurance
- Percent of children who receive coordinated, ongoing, comprehensive care within a medical home
- Percent of children with age-appropriate fine motor skills
- Percent of children ages 19-35 months who have been fully immunized
- Percent of children with detected developmental delays at kindergarten entry
- Percent of children with chronic health problems at kindergarten entry
- Percent of children with blood lead levels at or below 10 micrograms per deciliter
- Percent of children recognizing the relationships between letters and sounds at kindergarten entry
- Percent of children who use an expanding vocabulary, speak clearly, use conventional grammar
- Percent of children with reading proficiency at the fourth grade as measured by the state's reading proficiency test

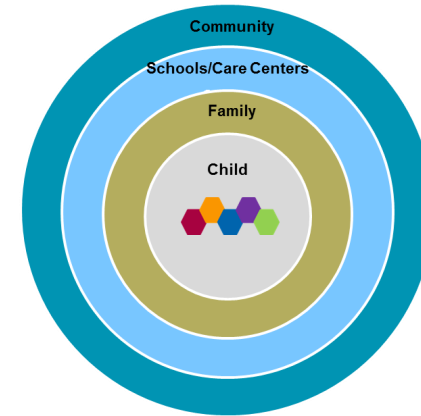
Appendix: Child Indicators and Emerging Themes

- Percent of children at kindergarten entry who can count beyond 10, sequence patterns and use nonstandard units of length to compare numbers
- Percent of children recognizing basic shapes at kindergarten entry
- Percent of children who demonstrate knowledge about self, including racial identity, social class, self-perceived abilities, and culture
- Percent of children who exhibit positive social behaviors when interacting with their peers
- Percent of children who regulate their own emotions and behaviors, manage feelings, follow limits and expectations, and take care of their own needs appropriately
- Percent of children who actively engage in learning activities
- Percent of children with moderate to serious difficulty following directions

Emerging themes

- **Children's inclusive behavior of others:** The extent to which children's behavior includes other children who are different from them racially, linguistically, and culturally

Appendix: Family Indicators and Emerging Themes



Indicators

- Percent of children living in families with income below the federal poverty threshold
- Percent of births to teens ages 15 to 17
- Percent of births to women who receive late or no prenatal care
- Percent of births to mothers with less than a grade 12 education
- Percent of mothers experiencing depression
- Percent of children in out-of-home placement (foster care) who have no more than two placements in a 24-month period
- Percent of births to unmarried women
- Percent of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases
- Percent of families reading to young children at least once a day

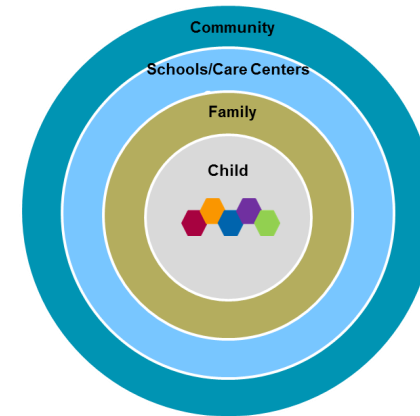
Emerging Themes

- **Family, parental access to resources:** The extent to which parents or guardians actively access and engage with resources, such as informational, educational, cultural, and financial
- **Family, parental levels of chronic stress:** Family conditions such as parents or guardians working multiple jobs, absence of a partner, or absence of a social network for extended periods of time
- **Family, parenting of children in culturally appropriate ways:** Parents' or guardians' beliefs and behaviors with children regarding respect, obedience, and participation in social and educational activities; parents' expectations and behaviors according to a child's gender

Indicators

- Percent of 3 to 4 year olds enrolled in a center-based early childhood care and education program
- Percent of care and education settings that have varied opportunities for children to be read books in an engaging manner in group or individualized settings at least twice a day in full day programs
- Percent of care and education settings that provide varied opportunities and materials to build an understanding of numbers, number names, and their relationship to object quantities and symbols
- Percent of care and education settings with age- and developmentally appropriate materials and equipment indoors and outdoors for children throughout the day
- Percent of care and education settings implementing validated effective curricula for social skills development
- Percent of care and education settings that provide children opportunities to develop a sense of competence and positive attitudes toward learning, such as persistence, engagement, curiosity, and mastery
- Percent of care and education settings that have an outdoor play area that is protected by fences or by natural barriers to prevent access to streets and to avoid other dangers, such as pits, water hazards, or wells
- Percent of care and education settings with an average teacher/child ratio of: 1:4 for infants, 1:6 for toddlers, 1:10 for preschoolers, and 1:12 for kindergarteners
- Percent of early childhood teachers with a bachelor's degree and specialized training in early childhood
- Percent of care and education settings with at least one staff member who has a certificate showing satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training
- Percent of care and education settings that have access to mental health consultation

Appendix: Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care Indicators and Emerging Themes (1 of 2)



- Percent of care and education settings that have a work environment for staff, including classrooms and staff rooms, that are comfortable, clean, and in good repair
- Percent of care and education settings with teaching staff who help children follow a predictable but flexible daily routine by providing time and support for transitions
- Percent of care and education settings where teaching staff interact with children to assess their strengths and needs to inform curriculum development and individualize teaching
- Percent of care and education settings where teaching staff are active in identifying and using any teaching practices, curriculum approaches, or materials that are affirming with respect to gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ability, race, or religion
- Percent of care and education settings where teaching staff, program staff or both work as a team to implement daily teaching and learning activities including individualized family or education plans
- Percent of care and education settings that have multiple strategies to involve and support parents

Appendix: Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care Indicators and Emerging Themes (2 of 2)

Emerging Themes

- **Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care exhibiting teacher-child interactions in culturally appropriate ways:** Care providers' and teachers' beliefs and behaviors with children regarding respect, obedience, participation, and time; staffs' expectations and behaviors according to a child's gender
- **Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care workforce characteristics, backgrounds:** Care providers' and teachers' racial and ethnic background and ability to speak in a child's home language and to engage with family and community members of children whom they are serving
- **Programs, Care Centers, Schools, and Family Care inclusiveness of diversity:** The extent to which there is representativeness from diverse racial, cultural and language groups in planning and governing processes related to young children and their development





Appendix: Community Indicators and Emerging Themes

Indicators

- Percent of families with children paying more than 30% of their income for housing
- Percent of children living in a neighborhood in which more than 20% of the population lives in poverty
- Percent of children needing and receiving emergency housing services
- Percent of children receiving child care subsidies

Emerging Themes

- **Community and neighborhood safety:** The extent to which acts of violence occur within a neighborhood or community
- **Neighborhood stability:** The percentages of a neighborhood's home ownership, lease to purchases, and long-term rental agreements
- **Community and neighborhood food choices:** The extent to which a community has grocery stores with healthy food choices