ANNUAL REPORT 2021
Early Learning Ventures (ELV) is a Colorado-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to expanding access to quality, affordable child care. The organization focuses its efforts on improving the quality of early child care programs – 85% of which are small, independent businesses that lack the infrastructure and resources to invest in quality improvements.
Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to share our 2021 Annual Report, celebrating our many successes from the past year. We are so grateful for your support and all that has allowed us to accomplish together.

This past year, we focused on our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. ELV is committed to providing education, resources, and support services to child care providers which allows them to foster equitable, high quality learning environments for children and families. Diversity, equity and inclusion are deeply embedded in our work at ELV, both internally in our organizational ecosystem and externally through our work with child care providers nationwide. We will continue this important work in 2022, finalizing our guiding principles and action plan.

With this community focus in mind, we continued to help child care providers elevate quality for children and families from historically excluded communities through our Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership program. We were very proud that we hit full enrollment during the pandemic and remained fully enrolled throughout 2021. Many EHS sites across the country have been under-enrolled and we believe our success is due to our unique child care partnership format. Our partner sites stayed open throughout the pandemic, whereas many EHS-only programs closed or went virtual. Remaining open meant that our families had reliable in-person child care so that parents could go to work or school.

Nationwide, we are supporting more child care providers than ever before. Over 140 new programs began using our Alliance CORE child care management software in 2021 and we expect to grow at a rate of 15 per month in 2022! Our success is based on strong relationships leading to a high percentage of member referrals. We have worked hard to build the trust of child care providers and are so proud that our back-office tools are helping providers manage their businesses and spend more time providing quality educational experiences for children.

We are so thankful for all of the individuals and organizations who continue to support our work!

Warmest regards,

Judy Williams
Executive Director
2021 ELV BY THE NUMBERS

- **868** providers served
- **56,407** children impacted by quality
- **420** providers used our Alliance CORE child care management system
- **10** states have active ELV users
- **100%** of our EHS-CCP slots were fully enrolled
- **80%** of our EHS-CCP teachers were EHS qualified

Early Learning Ventures
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(844) 293-2820
Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships

ELV grew by 140+ sites and expanded to two new states in 2021. Due to this expansion, our support team has continued to grow as we cover time zones ranging from Hawaii to New York.

We hosted ECE representatives at our partner sites and helped share their voices and stories on a large scale.

ELV shared 40+ informational interview videos to our online audience covering topics from licensing, food program demos, testimonials and so much more.

We also hosted 11 webinars on a variety of topics, including: diversity, equity and inclusion, healthy cooking, active supervision, and stimulus package information.
ELV Early Head Start Child Care Partnership have focused attention on federal, state, and local collaboration in order to support our Shared Services vision. We have continued to leverage our EHS services work by extending 110 of the program activities and/or resources to the wider ELV network increasing the no cost incidental impact of the federal dollars.

596
EHS - ELIGIBLE INFANTS/TODDLERS & THEIR FAMILIES SERVED

100%
AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT (% OF FUNDED ENROLLMENT)

81.2%
PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED
Health Screenings:
Throughout the beginning of 2021, on-site visitation to child care programs was stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in April 2021, staff were able to start visiting Child Care Partners in-person depending on the local public health restrictions and/or the comfort level of the child care program and ELV staff member. With limited access to seeing children in-person came limited opportunities to complete screenings for children enrolled in EHS. Two counties in particular abstained from external visitors for the majority of 2021, with one just starting to allow visitors in 2022. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and wanting to respect our partners' and staff’s comfort with being in-person, screening percentages were lower than anticipated for 2021.

- The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams.
  - 85% of children received a hearing exam
  - 75% of children received a dental exam
  - 86% of children received a vision screening
  - 89% of children received a developmental screening

Family Engagement:

- ELV utilizes Individualized Professional Development Plans to support learning opportunities focused on family engagement. Teachers respect and understand that families as first teacher. Additionally, teachers recognize that families play an important role in establishing learning goals for individualized young learner success as they are becoming lifelong, school ready learners.
- In 2021 we hosted 109 family engagement events – a 43% increase from 2020! Our providers developed strategies to host events even when COVID surges were happening in their counties. There was a mix of in-person smaller and/or outdoor events as well as virtual events to continue providing safe activities for families. They also sent home family-friendly activities that tied to what children were learning in the classroom. Some providers created private Facebook groups to help encourage community building.
- 75% of families completed a Family Partnership Agreement
Early Learning Ventures completes an annual community assessment in order to outline the strengths and needs of ELV EHS service delivery areas and ensure that our programming remains responsive. The community assessment is underway, and we’ll be comparing the results to our 2020-21 assessment.

In 2020, minimum wage increased statewide, however, the living wage in each county for one adult and one child remains almost 4 times more than the federal poverty guidelines. The living wage is the hourly rate that an individual in a household must earn to support themselves and their family. This directly affects EHS enrollment, as a majority of families must fall below the poverty guidelines.

ELV has seen a steady increase in the percentage of our children experiencing homelessness over the past few years. In 2018 3% of families served by ELV CCP experienced homelessness and that rose to 11% in 2021! This is something we will continue to monitor, building partnerships with appropriate resources in the communities we serve.

In 2020, the number of preschool slots increased in all counties within Early Learning Ventures’ EHS service delivery area. Arapahoe county received the highest number of preschool slots (559), while Morgan County only increased by 25. Adams, Garfield, Mesa and Pueblo County preschool slots increased between 100 to 460 slots. Despite this small increase, there is still significant need in all ELV EHS service delivery areas for high quality, accessible infant and toddler care. This is particularly evident as we gauge the continued impact of the COVID pandemic on the child care industry in Colorado. An Early Milestones Colorado survey indicated that Colorado lost about 9.4% of all licensed child care slots, impacting access to high quality infant and toddler care.
Leadership Development by the Numbers

Leadership Training – 1142 hours for 389 individuals

- 12 Family Child Care Home Providers completed ELV’s Virtual Business Series
- 14 ELV Staff Members and Center Directors earned a new Aim4Excellence National Director Credential
- 8 ELV Staff Members and Center Directors renewed an Aim4Excellence National Director Credential
- 26 individuals attended ELV Communities of Practice for Center Directors and Family Child Care Home Providers
- 329 individuals learned about the Time Space Percentage via ELV’s What’s Up Wednesday

Quality Improvement & COVID funded Projects Completed in 2021

- 42, or 100% of EHS partner sites, were supported with purchases of learning environment materials, appliances, and / or technology
- 11 Improved Outdoor Environments: Surfacing, bollards, shade structures, fencing, doors, covered porch
- 8 Improved Indoor Environments: Flooring, bathrooms, sink and diaper stations, insulation, natural light
- 1 Family Child Care Home expansion

Data Collected

- 42 EHS partners completed the new EHS partner renewal application
- 20 individuals (ELV staff and EHS teachers in partner sites) completed the new EHS Exit Survey
- 1 External Evaluation Published

Elsa Sackett Warren
Leadership Development Manager
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Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership
Sites Served 2020-2021

ADAMS COUNTY:
Bernice Martinez
Bree Andreen
Dee Dee Overton
Discovery Time Kids Early Learning Center
Little Boots Early Learning Center
Step by Step Child Development Center

ARAPAHOE COUNTY:
Bright Academy
Children’s Chalet Inc.
Cribs 2 Crayons
New Legacy Early Learning Center
Parker Learning Center Infant Toddler Discovery
Rising Star Early Learning Center
Shailee’s Sunbeams
Stephanie Olson
The Baby Haven

GARFIELD COUNTY:
Caring Kids Preschool
Faith Lutheran Child Care Center
Rebecca Fuller
Yampah Mountain High School Nursery

MESA COUNTY:
Brittany Hasemann
Dana Sheple
Denesha Gibbs
District 51 Young Parent Child Care Center
Jennifer Freed
Jennifer Renteria
Kristine Edmunds
Landmark Christian Preschool
Learning Tree
Little Blossoms Early Learning Center
Patricia Garner
Stacey Tonozzi
We Kare A Lot
Wishes and Dreams Child Learning Center

MORGAN COUNTY:
Donna Araujo
Rio Marquez
Sarah Neal

PUEBLO COUNTY:
Bright Beginnings
Children’s Palace Learning Center
Erica Cisneros
Kinderkirk Preschool
Life Center Academy
Southside Children’s Center
Southside Children’s Center 2
Yolanda Gonzalez

EHS-CCP Enrollment by County
# Early Learning Ventures Program Year (PY) 2021 Financials

View Annual Financial Audit Report [here](#).

## ELV PY 2021 Financials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>ACTUALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
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<td><strong>$7,936,479</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,005,726</strong></td>
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## EHS PY 2021 Financials

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<tr>
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<th>ACTUALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
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<td>$5,646,533</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Federal Share</td>
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<td>In-Kind</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$1,597,667</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Total EHS Program Funding

- **Non-Federal/Private Funding** $1,597,667
- **Federal/Public Funding** $5,646,533

## Non-Federal Share

- **Cash** $172,235
- In-Kind $1,235,788

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Early Learning Ventures  
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The Team

ELV Board of Directors

- David Merage, President
- Laura Merage, Vice President
- Sue Renner, Assistant Vice President

Early Head Start Governing Board

- Cindy Bernal, Community Outreach Coordinator, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children
- Kelly Clement, Portfolio Manager, Consolidated Investment Group
- John Goetz, Garfield County Policy Council Representative, EHS Governing Board Chair
- Mary Gross, Executive Director, Morgan County Family Center
- Kristin Habicht, M.A., Department Chair Early Childhood Education, Arapahoe Community College
- Laura Hazen, Licensed Attorney, HK Law LLC
- Sue Renner, Vice President, Merage Foundations
- Teresa Ribble, Licensing Supervisor, Colorado Office of Early Childhood
- Melissa Schierland, Self Sufficiency Supervisor, Mesa County Department of Human Services

Management Team

- Judy Williams, Executive Director
- Tim Garcia, Child Care Partnerships Director
- Jennifer Garcia Rosendo, Family Engagement Manager
- Ty Johnson, Early Education Manager
- Elsa Sackett Warren, Leadership Development Manager
- Kailee Smith, Health and Safety Manager
- Tristan Clerihew, Client Support & Product Manager
- Jennifer Hinderliter, Strategic Development Manager

Policy Council

- Nancy Ketchum
- Unnique Gonzales
- John Goetz: (Vice Chairperson)
- Victoria Muldovan
- Susan Lawman
- Rachel Hubbard
- Kelly Esch
- Melanie Christian (Chairperson)
- Dominique Mundt
- Lisa Aiken-Jillson