

**VISIONS FOR EARLY LEARNING WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL COALITION
2012-2013 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISIONS FOR EARLY LEARNING the West Central Regional Early Learning Coalition (WCRELC) is committed to promoting partnerships and community connections that support early learning in a five county region of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, the northern part of Pacific, and Thurston counties.

The community assessment will be used to inform the development of a strategic plan. To facilitate alignment of the regional plan with the state Early Learning Plan, the community assessment data has been organized around the five components of the state plan. It includes both data related to the measurement indicators and additional relevant data to create a broader picture of the community.

A synopsis of the community assessment is below. Analysis of this data will occur during strategic planning.

Ready and Successful Children

- ✓ The percentage of children meeting or exceeding third grade reading ranges from 63% in Grays Harbor to 75% in Thurston for the 2011-2012 school year.
- ✓ The percentage of children meeting or exceeding third grade math is lower than reading, ranging from 43% in Pacific to 73% in Thurston for the 2011-2012 school year.
- ✓ State-wide, more than 50% of children ages 3 – 5 were not served/enrolled in ECEAP or Head start due to lack of funding. Most of these children enter kindergarten without a preschool experience.
- ✓ Depending upon the domain, 51.1% to 95.5% of children demonstrated characteristics of entering kindergarten, according to the statewide assessment conducted between 2011-2013.
- ✓ Participation in ECEAP resulted in growth in the area of social/emotional.

Ready and Successful Parents, Families and Caregivers

- ✓ Significant improvement was made in the percentage of pregnant women who received prenatal care in their first trimester. The overall rate receiving this care ranged from 74% in Pacific to 82% in Grays Harbor.
- ✓ The increase in the number of dependency filings in Mason County may indicate an increase in the number of reported child abuse and neglect cases. All other counties appeared to decrease or maintain the number of dependency filings.
- ✓ The four-year trend of poverty rates for children under age 17 increased for Thurston, Pacific, and Grays Harbor, but decreased or it was maintained by Mason and Lewis County.
- ✓ Not only has the percentage of Hispanic children under five years of age increased in all counties, the percentage of Hispanic children living in poverty is much higher than white children. The highest percentage of children living in poverty is Hispanic children living in Mason County.

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Ready and Successful Professionals

- ✓ The implementation of the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) will be focused on increasing the skills and qualifications of classroom staff in early learning settings. Until then, there is very little data about professionals in the field of early learning in our region.

Ready and Successful Schools

- ✓ An increase of full day kindergarten schools from eight schools in 2012-2013 to forty schools in 2013-2014 school year in the region has occurred. State-wide, schools with the highest percentage of children receiving free/reduced lunch will be funded for full day kindergarten first. If the state implements this funding over a period of time, most schools in this region will not receive funding until the end of the implementation period.

Ready and Successful Systems and Communities

- ✓ The cost of child care takes a disproportionate amount of household income for families who do not qualify for state subsidized childcare. It is especially hard for families whose income is just above the qualifying threshold of 175%.
- ✓ Infant care in a licensed center ranges from \$693/month to \$865. In a family childcare home, it is less expensive, ranging from \$585/month to \$680. The cost of toddler and preschool care ranges from \$520/mo. to \$715 for a center; and \$507 to 650/mo. in a licensed family home.