



2013 Community Needs Assessment

Overview

The Mason County Early Learning Coalition has created this document to assess the early learning needs in our community and identify priorities to guide future coalition activities. Data in this document comes from state and local measures and are organized around the state Early Learning Plan.



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State and Regional Framework

State: The Washington State Department of Health created Kids Matter, a collaborative and comprehensive strategic framework with the overall goal that children are healthy and ready for school. Kids Matters identified outcomes within the following four goal areas:

- Access to health insurance and medical homes
- Mental health and social-emotional development
- Early care and education/child care
- Parenting information and support

Regional and State: The West Central Regional Early Learning Coalition organized their assessment around the five components of the state Early Learning Plan.

- Ready and Successful Children
- Ready and Successful Parents, Families and Caregivers
- Ready and Successful Professionals
- Ready and Successful Schools
- Ready and Successful Systems and Communities

County Overview

- In 2010, the total population of Mason County was 60,669 with the City of Shelton as the county seat and the only incorporated locale.¹
- In 2010, 38.8%, of all family households included children under the age of 17 years.¹
- In 2010, 5.4% of Mason County's population was under the age of 5 years.¹
- In 2010, 5% of Mason County's children under the age of 5 year are born into families where one or more parent was foreign-born (immigrant or refugee).²
- The racial/ethnic breakdown of Mason County children under five in 2010 was: Hispanic (17%), American Indian and Alaska Native (5%), Asian and Pacific Islander (2%), Black (1%), Two or more race groups (5%), White (71%).³

Community Health Assessment: An overview of local strengths, concerns and priorities can be found in the Mason County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The purpose of the CHA is to collect and analyze data, from a variety of sources, to identify health issues, barriers, and areas of opportunity impacting the health of Mason County residents. From the CHA, the following six health priorities were identified:

- Trained and prepared workforce able to access living wage jobs
- Access to affordable and healthy food
- Safe, affordable, healthy housing
- Access and appropriate use of health care services
- Built environment that promotes health
- Functional families

Of these priorities, the two that most relate to this Mason County Early Learning Needs Assessment are:

- Trained and prepared workforce able to access living wage jobs
- Functional Families

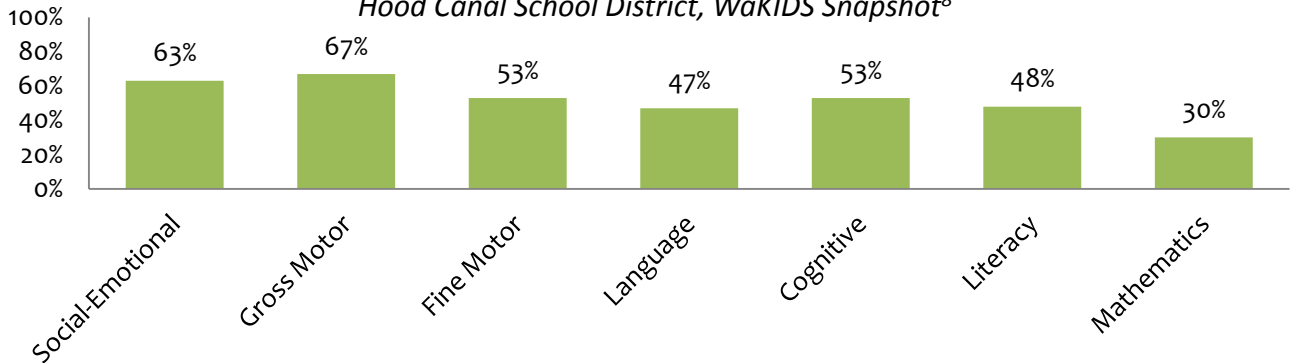


Ready and Successful Children

- In 2010-2011, 53% of Mason County students met or exceeded third grade math.⁴
- In 2010-2011, 72% of Mason County students met or exceeded third grade reading.⁴
- From the 2011-2012 West Central Regional Early Learning Community Assessment, the percent of income-eligible children ages 3-5 enrolled in Mason County state-funded ECEAP and Head Start was 77%.⁵
- In February 2010, (15) 3-year old and (3) 4-year olds were on ECEAP waitlists.⁶
- In 2011-2012, Hood Canal District was the only Mason County district to participate in WaKIDS Pilot.⁷

Percent of Kindergarten student (n=30) meeting expectations for areas of development and learning (Fall 2012)

Hood Canal School District, WaKIDS Snapshot⁸



Ready and Successful Parent, Families, and Caregivers

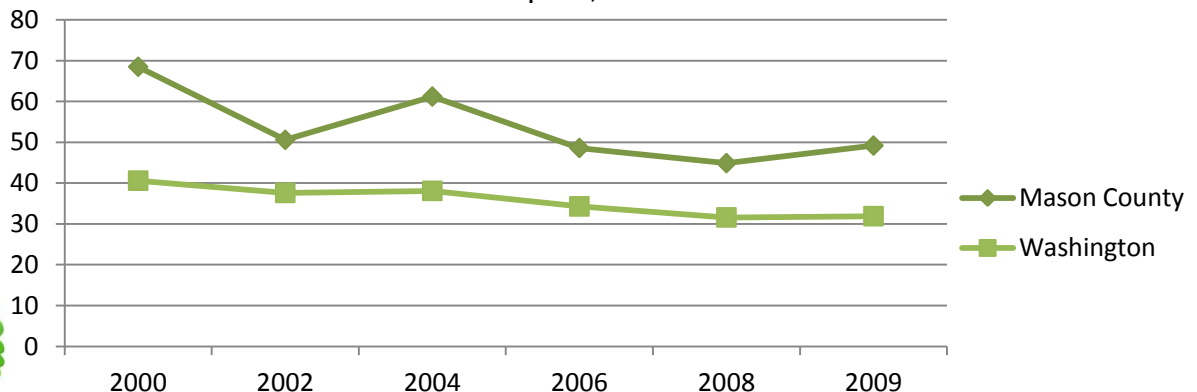
Mason County five year trend (2005-2009) in first trimester prenatal care.⁹

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
71%	71%	67%	68%	70%

- 25 pregnant women served by Nurse Family Partnership from 2009-2010.¹⁰
- Number of dependency filings: Jan-Aug 2010: 39; Jan-Aug 2011: 27.⁹

Alleged Victims of Child Abuse & Neglect in Accepted CPS Referrals.¹¹

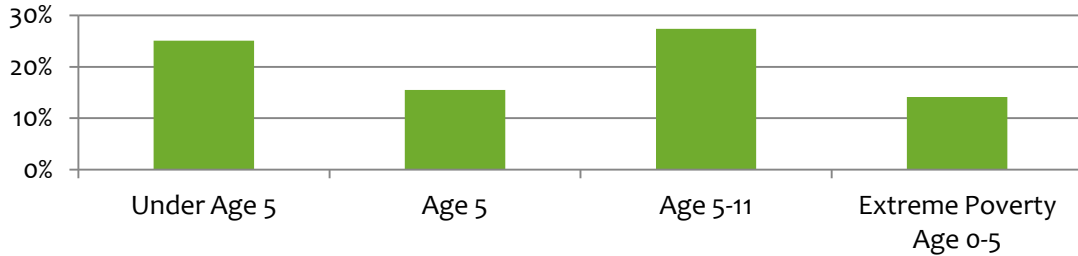
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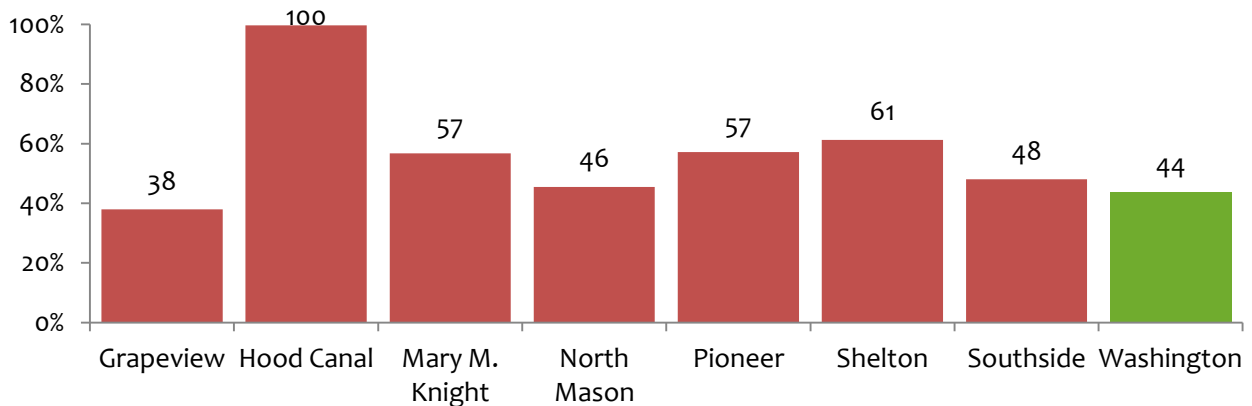
From a parent survey given at a Mason County ELC Parent Event in April 2013 (n=28):

- The services that are most important to parents and caregiver of Mason County to help young children to learn and develop well include child care, story time, recreation classes, preschool & play groups, and children's reading program.
- The barriers that are most likely to prevent parents/caregivers from using services include lack of information, language barriers, program times, and program costs.
- Parents and caregivers would like to receive information about parenting resources through email, telephone, mail, and Facebook/Twitter.

2011 Percent of Children Living in Poverty.⁹



Percent of Students on Free/Reduced Meal Program by School District, Mason County Schools and Washington State, 2010-2011¹²



Infants and Children Served by WIC, 2009¹³

% of infants born served by WIC	Total Served	Under Five	Pregnant, Breastfeeding and Postpartum Women	WIC Program Local Economy	WIC Education Sessions
65%	3,087	2,207	880	\$1,090,806	7,580

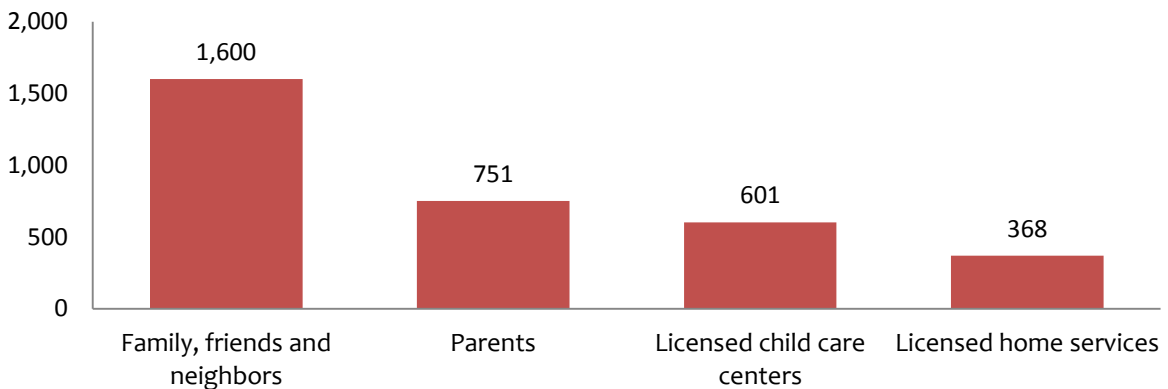


Percent of Mason County licensed child care providers who accept children with special services, 2011.¹⁴

	Infant	Toddler	Preschool	School Age
Licensed Center	72%	81%	98%	68%
Licensed Family Homes	96%	97%	97%	60%

- In 2010, 63.3% of Mason County children under the age of 12 were in need of child care.¹
- In 2010, the costs of child care accounted for about 17% of a Mason County family budget.³
- In 2010, there were 59 licensed child care providers (centers and home-based) in Mason County and 48 (81%) of these accepted Working Connections Child Care subsidies.³
- From May 2009 to April 2010, 81 infants and 230 toddlers were served with subsidies.¹⁵

Sources of care for infants and toddlers, 2009-2010.³



Ready and Successful Schools

- In 2011-2012, (2) Mason County schools operated state funded full day kindergarten: Shelton and Hood Canal.¹⁶
- School-based programs that serve children with special needs:
 - Early intervention programs that serve infants and toddler with special needs.
 - Birth to Three is a state-funded, home-based intervention for infants and toddlers who experience developmental delays.
 - Public School Districts serve toddlers (4-5) who experience developmental delays through Developmental Preschool Programs.
- In 2010-2011, 78 Mason County infants/toddlers and their families participated in Birth to Three.¹⁶



- In 2011, 96% of Mason County licensed child care centers accepted subsidization.¹⁷

Cost of child care as a percent of median income, 2011.¹⁷

Median Income	Licensed Centers			Licensed Family Homes		
	Infant	Toddler	Pre-School	Infant	Toddler	Pre-School
\$47,272	17.92%	13.43%	13.43%	15.18%	15.03%	12.9%

Barriers

From Mason Matters Early Learning Foundation's interviews with kindergarten teachers and child care staff (2010):

- Parent engagement/contact and limited parent/child events in rural communities was identified as the greatest challenges.
- High-needs neighborhoods lack basic infrastructure supports like food banks, service groups, churches, and businesses.
- Top needs of families of children not ready for kindergarten were:
 - Not willing to seek for help or know how to get help/use available resources.
 - Did not believe that kindergarten is important/valuable/poor attendance.
- Risk factors/barriers for children not ready for kindergarten include basic needs not met/economic crisis, education not a value, parents/caregivers in jail.
- Dental care was identified as the most common unmet health need.
- Children who do not come from a child care or preschool setting were less likely to be kindergarten ready as they tend to have less self-regulation, structure and self-care skills.

Other barriers

- Within Mason County, there is only one obstetrics office and one pediatrician office, making it difficult to provide specialized healthcare to the maternal and child population.
- Despite a growing Latino population, only one provider office is Spanish speaking, creating a language barrier for a minority population already affected by health disparities.
- Further barriers to care may include difficulty in obtaining transportation, finding childcare, and fear of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).
- From a parent survey given at a Mason County ELC Parent Event in April 2013, the barriers that prevent Mason County families from finding and using the services that are most important to them include lack of information, language barriers, services as too expensive, and program times.



Summary

- This document has provided a needs assessment for Mason County at only one point in time. Continuous evaluation of the needs of the community is vital. However, the information presented here is useful in identifying the strengths and challenges of Mason County as well as to provide direction for future activities of the Mason County Early Learning Coalition.
- Strengths of Mason County include high percentage of child care providers that accept children with special services, school district participation in WaKIDS, and increasing impact of Nurse Family Partnership.
- Challenges of Mason County include high rates of CPS referrals and children living in poverty, effectively disseminating information about early learning events and poor access to services for Spanish speaking families.
- The next step for the Mason County Early Learning Coalition is to use the information in this document to create a strategic plan to address the needs of the county. To contribute towards making a collective impact, this strategic plan should align with the Mason County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

References

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