

THE SOUTHERN OREGON EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT NETWORK

–What is the Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network?

The Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network is a coordinated system of resources and services, centered on pregnant families and families with children under five, committed to ensure every child in Jackson and Josephine counties has an equitable opportunity to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive.

–How does it work?

When someone is planning to have a baby or becomes pregnant, they are eligible to access the Network's resources and services through a self-referral or through their primary care doctor's office, OB provider, their coordinated care organization if they are on the Oregon Health Plan, or other health care or human services providers they are working with.

Resources and support services that make up the Network, include pregnancy coaching, home visiting, peer support groups, parent education, child care, preschool, adult education/training, addictions recovery, behavior health support, and financial support.

A Family Success Plan is developed in partnership with the coordinated care organization or other trusted provider who then makes referrals as needed to community partners through the Connect Oregon/Unite Us referral system to carry out the plan.

A community health worker or other systems navigator is assigned, by the CCO or whichever provider is assisting in the development of the Family Success Plan, to manage the referrals along with the family to ensure coordination and access to the services the family is referred to.

This same process to develop Family Success Plans and to access Network resources and support is available for all local families with children under the age of five.

Providers in the Oregon Health Plan system will receive financial incentives for helping pregnant families and families with children under the age of 5 develop Family Success Plans and signing up families for home visiting programs, peer support groups, parent education workshops and wraparound services, as well as material supports such as housing, food and basic necessities.

Families who develop Success Plans with their CCOs or other trusted partners will receive:

- Diapers, car seats and other vital care items from the AllCare Babe Store or the revised Starting Strong program with Jackson Care Connect, or the Oasis Center Baby Store.

- Access to a variety of other resources and services available through additional community partners in the Network.

–What might be part of a Success Plan for my baby or young child?

The consistent focus on developing and carrying out the Success Plan is on whatever it takes to make sure children have an equitable opportunity to thrive.

The Success Plan will cover the social determinants of success: housing, food, social/emotional wellness, child care, family support and connections, and pathways for opportunities for children and parents.

The Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network features three levels of support:

- **Universal support**, available to all families;
- **Increased support**, available to families requiring additional assistance to succeed;
- and **Intensive support**, available to families with children who have high needs, families impacted by substance use or mental health issues, or other significant challenges.

On the **universal level**, this may mean a Success Plan with a home visiting/support group such as Doulas & Company for pregnancy and childbirth coaching, or Grandmas2Go, who offer six months of coaching and assistance after the birth of a child. It might include assistance in finding high quality, affordable child care, as well as access to family-friendly parenting workshops through the Family Connection, our region's parent education hub. And it might include paid internships or other employment opportunities that lead to sustainable, living wage jobs.

On all Family Success Plans, there is a priority of using all available resources, including paid family leave if it is available, to provide as much time for bonding between the parents and child as possible.

On the **increased level** of support, the Family Success Plan might include a home visiting program such as the Nurse/Family Partnership program, providing care and support by a registered nurse from pregnancy through age 2, or from the Babies First program, serving families with children 0 to 5. Specialized parenting workshops are offered through the Family Connection. Rental assistance and support for other basic needs would be available through the Early Childhood Support Fund, administered by ACCESS and UCAN. And on this level as well, the plan might include paid internships or other employment opportunities that lead to sustainable, living wage jobs.

On the **intensive level** of support, Success Plans might include pregnancy and after-childbirth support from the Oasis Center for moms in recovery from substance use

issues; enrollment in a home visiting program such as the Nurse/Family Partnership program, providing care and support by a registered nurse from pregnancy through age 2; or from the Babies First program, serving families with children 0 to 5. Enrollment with the Family Nurturing Center for child care and family support would also be an option. Housing, child care and other needs might be able to be addressed through a variety of community partners as well as the Early Childhood Support Fund. Peer support groups, wraparound services, and parenting workshops could all be included. And on this level as well, the plan might include paid internships or other employment opportunities that lead to sustainable, living wage jobs.

Also on the intensive level, Success Plans for families with children with special needs might include home visiting and support from the CaCoon program, which provides services from birth to age 21 from a trained registered nurse. Families might be connected with FACT Oregon for specific training and assistance with advocacy for their children. And families could also access services through the regional Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education programs to focus on efforts to ensure their children have every opportunity available to enter the K-12 system ready to thrive.

–How are all of these services coordinated?

The Network is coordinated through the Connect Oregon/Unite Us referral system, through community health workers and other systems navigators, and through Southern Oregon Success.

Southern Oregon Success is a regional collaboration responsible for convening and facilitating ongoing meetings of the community partners who make up the Network to make sure efforts are aligned in the ways families need them to be.

In the area of child care, the lead community partner is the Child Care Resource Network (CCRN), specializing in helping both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking child care providers begin and sustain their businesses.

For access to high-quality preschool, the lead community partner is Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS), the region's early learning hub. SOELS is responsible for the overall coordination and support for all services for children and families from pregnancy to age 5 and is under the administration of the newly approved Oregon Department of Early Learning & Care (DELIC). SOELS is the regional coordinator of MIECHV programs and convenes the region's home visiting network or providers.

In the area of social/emotional wellness, Southern Oregon Success is developing a regional Social/Emotional Wellness Network to provide easy access to support programs, recovery agencies, behavioral health agencies and parenting education workshops for individuals and families with children of all ages.

Here's a link to [14 different examples](#) of how the Early Childhood Support Network can provide family-centered services and support.

–What investments are needed to build the capacity of the system to deliver these coordinated services across the three levels of support?

Two funds will be established:

1. Early Childhood Support Fund—to provide flexible, “whatever it takes” funds to families and community partners for specific needs to reach goals set in Family Success Plans.
2. Child Care Expansion Fund—to provide support for new providers to enter the field and for current providers to expand capacity, raise salaries, help pay for insurance or facilities and help fund subsidized slots for child care or preschool.

–How is the Early Childhood Support Fund set up and administered?

Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS) sets the parameters and priorities for the use of the resources of the Early Childhood Support Fund. To ensure consistent use of an equity lens, a designated Equity, Diversity & Inclusion position on the SOELS governance council is being created.

Distribution from the fund is administered by ACCESS in Jackson County and UCAN in Josephine County, following the parameters and priorities set by SOELS.

–How does the Southern Oregon Child Care Expansion Fund work?

The parameters and priorities of the child care expansion fund are also decided upon by the SOELS board and are administered by SOELS staff. Funds can be used in any way SOELS determines will increase access, increase wages and lower costs for families. Here's an example of [a similar fund developed in Humboldt County, California](#).

–Where does the funding come from?

On behalf of the Network, Southern Oregon Success is responsible for acquiring the funding for both the Early Childhood Support Fund and the Southern Oregon Child Care Expansion Fund, as well as funding for increasing capacity in Home Visiting programs, family-centered recovery programs and other needs for comprehensive, integrated support.

Rep. Pam Marsh from south Jackson County has introduced legislation in the 2023 session that would establish the Early Childhood Support and Child Care Support funds in state law and provide up to \$5 million per year for five years to launch the two efforts.

In the meantime, the Network is working with ACCESS and UCAN to set up the funds for contributions from national, state and regional foundations, as well as from community partners. In early 2023, funds will begin to be distributed following the development of the parameters and priorities by the SOELS board of directors.

Our initial goal is to raise \$10 million per year for five years for the two funds to significantly improve outcomes for children and families in Southern Oregon and to establish proof of concept for fully integrated, family centered systems of resources and services throughout Oregon.

–How has the Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network been developed?

In 2016, community partners participating in the Southern Oregon Success collaboration established the Southern Oregon ACEs Training Team to raise awareness of the root causes of physical health challenges, mental health challenges and behavioral health challenges as uncovered by the ground-breaking Adverse Childhood Experiences study by the Center for Disease Control and the Kaiser Permanente medical group.

The curriculum presented by the ACEs Training Team has been developed by ACE Interface, national specialists in combining vital information from the ACEs study with specific steps for building resilience for children, families and communities through what are called “trauma-informed” practices.

The Southern Oregon ACEs Training team has held over 500 training sessions and workshops for over 18,000 people in Jackson and Josephine counties since 2016, including work with all levels of education, health care, mental health care, human services, public safety and workforce development.

The common vocabulary and common approach established by the training provides the foundation for the Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network, along with the work of SOELS, our regional Early Learning Hub. SOELS convenes cross-sector collaborations, using [Raise Up Oregon](#) as the strategic plan, guiding investments in the region. Regional data is used to establish priority populations - those families with children under age five who are furthest from opportunities and resources. The systems level focus of the hub has the region poised for this next level of action to meet the needs of families.

The ACEs Team continues to offer ongoing training sessions for all schools, agencies, community groups and the general public at no charge, thanks to the financial support of the Southern Oregon Success community partners.

–Once a common vocabulary and common approach had been established, what happened next?

Community partners who implemented trauma-informed practices began to see better outcomes for the children and families they work with. The Phoenix/Talent School District, for instance, fully committed to the practices in all of their schools. In 2017, the graduation rate from Phoenix High School was 67%. In 2021, the graduation rate was 95.5%.

As confidence in the trauma-informed practices and the pathways to build resilience increased, the Southern Oregon Success collaboration looked for ways to maximize impact and increase better outcomes in the region.

In 2019-20, working with CoCreative, national specialists in effective collaboration, the Southern Oregon Success community partners set a goal of moving upstream as far as possible, and, using the [Strengthening Families Protective Factors](#) Framework to guide efforts, do everything they can to ensure that every child has an equitable opportunity to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive. From this effort, a number of work groups and initiatives were developed to focus on workforce issues, early childhood support, family resilience and access to resources and services. The Southern Oregon Family Advisory Council was developed to vet ideas and proposals, and to make recommendations to the full collaboration.

In late 2021, former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber presented to the Southern Oregon Success collaboration an idea developed by the Oregon Roundtable for Health Care & Education on the need for a Child Success Delivery System in every region in our state—a new, fully integrated, family-centered system of resources and services capable of reaching the precise goal that the Southern Oregon Success collaboration has set for every child reaching Kindergarten ready to thrive.

Southern Oregon Success secured funding from CareOregon through the Northwest Health Foundation to engage with CoCreative again in 2022 to expand and accelerate efforts to support children and families by developing a blueprint for a Child Success Delivery System in Jackson and Josephine counties.

The Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network is the first Child Success Delivery System to be developed in our state.

–How do all the pieces of the Network fit together?

The Southern Oregon Success collaboration and CoCreative worked throughout 2022 to establish 18 areas of focus with specific strategies to produce the best possible outcomes for children and families.

–What are the 18 areas of focus?

1. Child care access
2. Parenting education, skill building, and family connections

3. Transportation assistance
4. Accessible pediatric care and specialized services
5. Prenatal connections with parents/caregivers
6. Caregivers' attachment, wellbeing and quality time with babies
7. Connect families with supports and services based on where they're at
8. Continuum of housing stock
9. Food Security and Access
10. Legal Supports
11. Mental health and resilience building supports, including prevention & early intervention
12. Employment supports
13. Detox and inpatient substance treatment facilities plus transitional housing
14. Disability supports
15. On-demand higher acuity mental health supports
16. Aligning around values, principles, mindsets
17. Building a diverse and highly competent workforce
18. Ensuring coordinated, quality, and highly accessible services

–On what basis does the Network decide which areas to focus on first?

Acknowledging that all 18 areas need consistent work to strengthen and improve, the Network believes it can prioritize 5 areas to begin with while continuing to strengthen the other 13 areas of focus. Here is how the Network determined the 5 priority areas:

3 Principles for Prioritizing Areas of Work

These factors will determine which broad areas of impact we focus on first to maximize our social return on investment (money+time).

Factor	Description	Example
Cascading Benefits	Certain areas are high leverage places to focus first because they heavily influence families’ success in other areas.	<i>Access to child care supports access to education, employment, and services.</i>
The Tough Stuff	We want to avoid focusing on the well-defined “doable” areas first just because they are easy. It’s important to get started early on the tough challenges so we can learn our way forward on them.	<i>Increase capacity of home visiting programs to reach a far greater number of pregnant moms and families with children under 5.</i>
Greatest Harm	We will prioritize supports for those families experiencing the greatest harm precisely because these families are suffering the most and will need the greatest levels of support in order to succeed.	<i>Wrapping supports around parents with combinations of serious challenges is difficult but something we need to start on early.</i>

Our initial assessment of the top 5 areas to focus on first:

Factor:	Cascading Benefits	The Tough Stuff	Greatest Harm	Notes
1. Child care	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>Identified as the top priority to produce cascading benefits.</i>
2. Home visiting	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>MED</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>Coordinated enrollment benefits families at the universal, increased and intensive levels. Increasing capacity is a challenge.</i>

3. Service coordination	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>MED</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>Development of the Success Plan System and Social/Emotional Wellness Network can produce early wins and better outcomes.</i>
4. Detox services	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>Priority on services committed to keeping families together or connected during recovery.</i>
5. Community Caregiver Well-being	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>MED</i>	<i>MED</i>	<i>Indirectly benefits families but is key to workforce expansion and retention.</i>
Housing	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>HIGH</i>	<i>High benefits for families but not something that the Network can solve directly. The Network supports all strategies listed in the regional Community Health Improvement Plan to develop housing for all.</i>

3 Criteria for Prioritizing Interventions & Solutions within the Areas of Work

As we develop and scale solutions within the top priority areas, we want to be strategic, again working to maximize social return on investment. The following factors will help us prioritize work within each priority area.

Factor	Focal Question	Example
Early Wins	Which solutions will show visible, early results that will help us build momentum, hope, and engagement to continue to expand and deepen the work?	<i>We can quickly get more childcare spots by helping people who are ready to start up home childcare operations. CCRN has programs in English and Spanish to train and support new providers.</i>
Early Interventions with families	Which solutions will help us intervene earlier with families so that we're working upstream and minimizing downstream harm and costs	<i>Connecting parents to support and building a trusting relationship with at least one provider pays dividends over years.</i>

	over time?	
Deeper Investment in What's Working Now	<i>Which solutions will best build on what's already working, to recognize and support the great work that's already being done, avoid duplication of efforts, and make the best use of our resources?</i>	<i>We've named programs that are already proving out, such as the Family Nurturing Center, Oasis Center and others, so let's connect resources and capacity to those.</i>

4 Agreements for Systemic Change

In all the work we do together, we want to solve not only for the explicit, visible issues, but address the deeper systemic issues and dynamics. These four agreements guide how we will do that together over time.

Factor	How We Put Into Practice	Example
Advancing Integrated Strategy	We work to solve for multiple areas at once, even if an area is not an explicit priority, in how we implement solutions	<i>As, for example, we grow child care capacity, we also build a culture of care, ensure access and supports for families experiencing disabilities, provide wellbeing support for providers, and build a diverse and highly competent workforce.</i>
Embedding Purpose, Values, Principles, Mindsets	We address not only the explicit challenges, but we lift up the values, mindsets, and principles we want to embed across our community.	<i>We're explicit about why we're doing each part of the work, the principles that inform our approach, the mindsets we intend to foster, and how these all reflect the values of our community.</i>
Building, Honoring, and Sharing Power	We recognize the power of people who are already working close to the issues and those impacts, and "devolve" funding and decision-making to them, regardless of the specific area or intervention.	<i>Where an organization is already working in the community and advancing solutions, we shorten the time and process to getting funding directly to them to support and expand that work.</i>

Expanding Support & Ownership

Build momentum across political boundaries to “depoliticize” this work and work toward a community in which everyone thrives.

Engage diverse actors in helping to conduct needs analysis and co-develop and advance solutions, so we are all part of the work together.

Priorities:

4 Areas of Focus with Goals – these fall within the multi-tiered system of support for families

3 System Pillars—this is the system-level work that need to happen in order to deliver on the system of support for families

4 Areas of Initial Focus

1. Child care

1. Increase the number of center-based, home-based, and co-op child care options, with expanded hours beyond traditional days/hours
2. Simplify the process to become a child care provider while maintaining high standards of child care
3. Provide business start-up support to child care providers to increase capacity across the region, particularly in rural areas and among Spanish speakers
4. Increase compensation and benefits for child care providers while ensuring services are affordable to families

2. Home visiting

1. Universal home visiting for every pregnant family—with a continuum of utilizing peer supports, traditional health workers to RNs for initial screening and ongoing support/referral
2. Develop Success Plans for families

3. Detox services and transitional housing

1. Expand the successful model of providing prenatal care combined with substance treatment
2. Increase stock of transitional family housing for families leaving detox and recovery programs

4. Parenting education, skillbuilding, and family connections

1. Immediate parenting and early child development support for kids with problematic behaviors
2. Universal parenting classes aligned with latest science & evidence
3. Increase respite care for caregivers that are struggling, in crisis
4. Targeted support for grandparents, extended families, and foster care providers, families impacted by the criminal justice system

3 System Pillars

1. **Culture of Care & Respect** (integrated throughout each of our goal areas)

1. Develop a culture of belonging, empathy, humility, and humanity across our institutions, groups, and community.
2. Ensure that help doesn't come with shame, judgment, stigma, or draconian measures
3. Embrace equity in all of our actions (e.g., differentiating supports, inclusion and respect for all providers in the system) and in our mindsets (e.g., "Every parent does well if they can. Every child does well if they can")

2. Caregiver Workforce Expansion & Well-Being

1. Improve the local education pipeline to grow local talent specifically in areas of need: early childhood educators, behavioral health clinicians, registered nurses, doulas, and peer support workers
2. Build self-healing, and reflective practice for providers
3. Provide training and support in vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, burnout
4. Social/Emotional Learning Network development

3. Service coordination

1. Universal adoption of the Connect Oregon/Unite Us platform (which includes Social Determinants of Success assessment)
2. Ensure warm handoffs between clinic systems, social services, schools, and other providers
3. Enroll all eligible families in WIC
4. Robust marketing in English and Spanish of current services (as well as important, underused programs such as the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#)).

Just under 16,000 children under the age of 5 live in Jackson and Josephine counties. Approximately 9,600 families live with income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

An [analysis by liif.org](#) estimates that to fully fund child care access for infant/toddlers and preschool age children in Jackson and Josephine counties would cost an additional \$130.9 million to build the infrastructure and capacity for infant/toddler care and \$13 million for preschool age children.

How do we move in the direction we need to go, fully understanding the enormity of the gap our children, families and communities face?

ESTIMATED COSTS FOR THE SOUTHERN OREGON EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT NETWORK:

Early Childhood Support Fund: \$5 million per year

Child Care Expansion Fund: \$5 million per year

Home Visiting Capacity Expansion: \$350,800 (Douglas & Company) plus TBD.

Family-Centered Recovery Expansion: \$450,000 per year (Oasis Center)

Other Community Partner Workforce Expansion: TBD

ONE TIME COSTS:

Additional Family-Centered Recovery Facility: \$14 million for construction and start-up costs (OnTrack)

2023 Summits & Convenings:

–Preschool/K12 Alignment Summits (January & August)

–SOELS, ACCESS & UCAN Fund Development Meeting (February)

–Early Contact & Success Plan Development Summit (March)

–Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign (March/April)

–Family Transportation Summit (April)

–Family-Centered Recovery Summit (May)

–Full Network Meetings (June & October): focus on 3 Pillars

–Quarterly Meetings of Network Partners in each of the top 4 Priority Areas