ECAS Network Snapshot

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is taking action for Hawai‘i’s children by bringing together diverse stakeholders to implement systems-level strategies. All efforts involve multiple government and non-government partners across the network.

Key Milestones of Systems Change Efforts in 2022

Navigate Landscape

Systems Change efforts respond to the shifting social, economic and political landscape in Hawai‘i.

In 2022, the network started the transition from pandemic response toward a more concerted focus on equity, while core concerns remain front and center:

- Sustain and strengthen child care and early learning
- Prevent family violence and protect early childhood mental health
- Support safe prenatal care and delivery
- Reach the hardest to reach families

Shift Awareness and Culture

Permanent change requires a fundamental reordering of societal priorities. We can do tremendous good for our youngest keiki by expanding the scope of commitments and building a shared understanding among stakeholders about needs and trends in Hawai‘i.

COMMIT TO KEIKI

- In preparation for the change in state leadership, Commit to Keiki engaged with gubernatorial candidates to increase the investment of resources in young children and their families, through a Steering Committee from the business community, philanthropy, county leaders and direct service providers. This cross-sector work reaches partners across the islands.

DATA EFFORTS

- In response to a growing demand for data to inform strategy, ECAS has created a variety of tools like Issue Briefs, Data Trend posters, Community Profiles, web-based Dashboards.

Support Pilots to Scale

Adopting promising practices within our communities allows us to respond to immediate needs and address local conditions. Niche innovations create opportunities for learning and demonstrate that improved outcomes are possible.

Improve Alignment

Alignment of the key players with shared priorities is critical to create a systems-level vision and respond to the many challenges confronting the system of supports for early childhood.

HAWAI‘I’S INTEGRATED INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLAN

- ECAS facilitated the effective collaboration of partners who have developed a statewide early childhood mental health system plan, brought in national technical assistance, developed a bill that would lead to implementation of the statewide behavioral health plan with support from the Governor, and offered trainings in infant mental health to close to 90 professionals.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS CONTINUUM

- Community conversations have started on a community-based Continuum of early childhood and family support in Waimānalo and Pāhoa. Initial funding for the project has been secured from private foundations and from Hawai‘i County government.

Strengthen Cross-sector Leadership

10 YEARS OF THE ACTION STRATEGY - LOOKING BACK / LOOKING FORWARD

- At the All Network Meeting in Fall 2022 the network review and celebration of the ECAS’ first decade of action set the stage for an ongoing discussion, led by Engaging Inquiry, of how the lessons learned suggest a strategic direction forward for the network.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Ongoing efforts include Strengthsfinder workshops to learn about leveraging individual and group strengths and SMALLIFY to strengthen our innovation leadership skills.

www.HawaiiActionStrategy.org
Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is organized into six cross-disciplinary Content Teams, working collaboratively to determine and implement strategies to improve the system of care for Hawai‘i’s youngest keiki.

**Hawai‘i Maternal and Infant Health Collaborative (HMIHC)**

HMIHC is working to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, while advancing health equity and reproductive justice.

- Improve systems of care and support for perinatal people with substance use disorder and their infants
- Increase access to contraception and promote reproductive life planning
- Promote and support breastfeeding
- Improve quality of care and community resources and supports for perinatal people

**Team 2** is working to support safe and nurturing families and improve the community-wide response to family violence.

- Implement and promote the Aloha at Home framework through a messaging campaign and partnerships with a network of service providers
- Expand implementation of family-strengthening toolkits
- Develop family-strengthening competencies and training for EC practitioners and service providers
- Create a parenting support system that connects families to support programs and services

**Team 3** is working to ensure all children are supported to reach their optimal development by working with early childhood and healthcare providers and families.

- Support child development screening and referral efforts
- Promote family engagement in child development
- Promote the social and emotional health of infants and toddlers
- Embed physical activity and nutrition best practices into the early childhood system

**Team 4** is working to increase access to early childhood programs and services throughout the state and to resolve program and service gaps.

- Build capacity in child care and early learning and increase access to ECE services for infants and toddlers and children in unstable housing
- Increase opportunities for family engagement and access to family support services
- Create a comprehensive, virtual early childhood resource and referral service
- Strengthen and integrate county and island-level early childhood systems and networks

**Team 5** is working to improve the quality of early childhood programs across all settings.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive personnel development (CSPD) system to strengthen and sustain an Early Childhood workforce that provides meaningful outcomes for children (0–5) with special needs

**Team 6** is working with families and communities to strengthen and streamline transitions through early childhood into school.

- Target strong early language and literacy development efforts to communities of greatest need, leading to the development of a pipeline for early reading, kindergarten readiness and early academic achievement

**Shared Vision for Hawai‘i**

- Keiki are healthy.
- Keiki are safe.
- Keiki develop on track.
- Keiki are ready for kindergarten.