



SPONSORING

ORGANIZATIONS

Early Connections Learning Centers

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Colorado Springs, CO,
80903

www.earlyconnections.org

CONTACT PERSONS

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**DATE PROGRAM/
ALLIANCE BEGAN**

Alliance was launched in
January 2008

EARLY CONNECTION LEARNING CENTERS

Colorado Springs, CO

SERVICE DELIVERY AREA

El Paso County—approximately 60 miles south of Denver, Colorado at the base of Pikes Peak. El Paso County is the most populated county in Colorado, with a population of approximately 730,000 people in 281,000 households.

POPULATION SERVED

Describe demographics of children served by the Alliance; numbers of children served: In 2021, we served 539 children at our centers (average weekly enrollment: 222); 59% of our families were eligible for state subsidized child care, which in El Paso County equates to income at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. 78% qualified for free/reduced cost meals, and 98% of families received tuition assistance either through state subsidy or on our sliding fee scale based upon family income. Our student population mirrors our community and was 63% Caucasian, 18% African American, 15% Multi-Racial, 1% Asian, 1% Hispanic, 1% Native American, and 1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

For our Home Network of the Pikes Peak Region program, we typically partner with 10-20 homes each year. The Family Child Care Home (FCCH) business owners are typically women and enroll 8-12 children in each FCCH.

SUMMARY OF APPROACH

Early Connections operates four full-day, year-round centers for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers; half-day, school-year preschool programs; and before/after school and full-day summer programs for school-age children. We also partner with local family child care home providers to increase capacity of quality options for families through our program Home Network of the Pikes Peak Region.

TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM(S) USED BY THE ALLIANCE

- ProCare

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Group Purchasing of goods and services
- Payroll Processing
- Administrative support
- USDA Food Program Administration
- Marketing
- Teacher coaching
- Child and Classroom Assessment
- Accreditation/licensing/quality rating improvement supports
- Accounting & Financial Reporting
- IT support
- Billing/Fee Collection
- Enrollment
- Training
- Child and Classroom Assessment
- Human Resources

FUNDING

Funding source for Alliance startup: Alliance began with funding provided by David & Laura Merage Foundation.

Funding source for ongoing Alliance implementation: Current funding partnerships include: Head Start/Early Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Pikes Peak United Way, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), program service fees (sliding scale), resource development funds and endowment income.

Do Alliance members pay fees for services received? Yes

Do membership fees cover Hub cost of services? No

IMPACT

In our centers, working in a shared services model has improved efficiencies in day-to-day operations and increased our capacity for high quality services. In our partnership homes, we have improved the sustainability of their FCCH businesses as well as increased high quality capacity in our area.