



South Coast  
Early Learning

# IMPACT REPORT



2021-2023

# WHAT WE DO

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# ABOUT US

We are the Regional Early Learning Hub for Coos, Curry, and Coastal Douglas Counties.

Our vision is a community where all young children, prenatal to age five, experience an early start that results in positive health, education, and life outcomes regardless of zip code, race, and family income.

Our work is a part of the Statewide Early Learning System Plan: Raise Up Oregon. Backbone agency support is provided by the Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board (SOWIB).

## Why Focus on Early Childhood?

90% of brain development occurs in the first 5 years of life. Positive early childhood experiences build the foundation for healthy development and learning necessary to become thriving adults.



Soft skills, also known as power skills, include critical thinking, problem-solving, public speaking, writing, teamwork, digital literacy, leadership, attitude, work ethic, and intercultural fluency, and are learned in the first 5 years.



Access to childcare and family support leads to employment stability and success in school, benefiting communities and local economies.



Every dollar invested in high-quality birth-to-five early childhood education for children and families delivers a 13% annual return on investment.



# WE ARE EARLY LEARNING CHAMPIONS

## THE STAFF

Our dedicated team has been doing this important work together for over four years at the South Coast Early Learning Hub. Our secret sauce? Innovation and perseverance!

**Charlotte Carver**, our Operations superstar, has been cooking up some serious magic with our data and assessments, giving us the power to make even more data-backed decisions. Charlotte also manages our Community Investments while providing support to our partners. Meanwhile, **Jessica Porter**, who oversees our Family and Community Engagement work has built a Parent Advisory Council that is keeping us informed and empowering parents to take charge. Jessica also leads our coordinated enrollment work and is our in-house database expert! **Vanessa Broadley**, our Family Navigator knows how to dish out some serious familial love, building up strong bonds with families and crafting a Parent Cafe team that's so popular, it's always packed. **Corinne Potts**, our Home Visiting Systems Coordinator, has created a model professional development system

that's helping individuals who work with kids and families build important skills and relationships. **Skaidra Scholey**, our brilliant P-3 Coordinator, has been building serious community capacity, leading to additional services for young kids in Port Orford and Gold Beach. **Sara Stephens**, Director leads our work and promotes partnerships helping to fill big gaps in early learning services.

**74**  
THE NUMBER OF  
COMBINED YEARS  
OUR TEAM HAS BEEN  
WORKING IN SERVICE  
TO KIDS AND  
FAMILIES

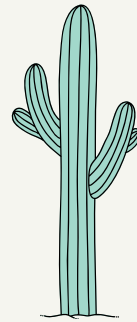
# WE COLLECT AND ASSESS DATA

In 2022-23 we compiled regional data around access to Early Care and Education, community, family needs and preferences for care, demographics, and barriers for providers in operating an ECE Business. Here is what we learned.

## **Our Region is Childcare Desert:**

25% of children ages 0-5 have access to a licensed or school-based slot.

*(Less than 33% is considered a Childcare Desert)*



## **Access has increased since 2021:**

Overall access to care has increased by 5% compared to 2021. We still have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

## **Preschool Age Care (ages 3-5):**

41% of preschool age children have access to care, up 10% from 2021; an increase of 231 slots, 94 of which are state or federally funded.



## **Infant and toddler (ages 0-2):**

Only 8% of children age 0-2 have access to licensed or school-based care. Some geographically isolated communities have no infant/toddler care altogether.



***The reality is families cannot afford to pay for the full cost of care. The average annual cost of infant care in Oregon is more than the cost of college tuition. Public and private funding is required to operate a viable childcare business in our communities.***

# Data Assessment Continued

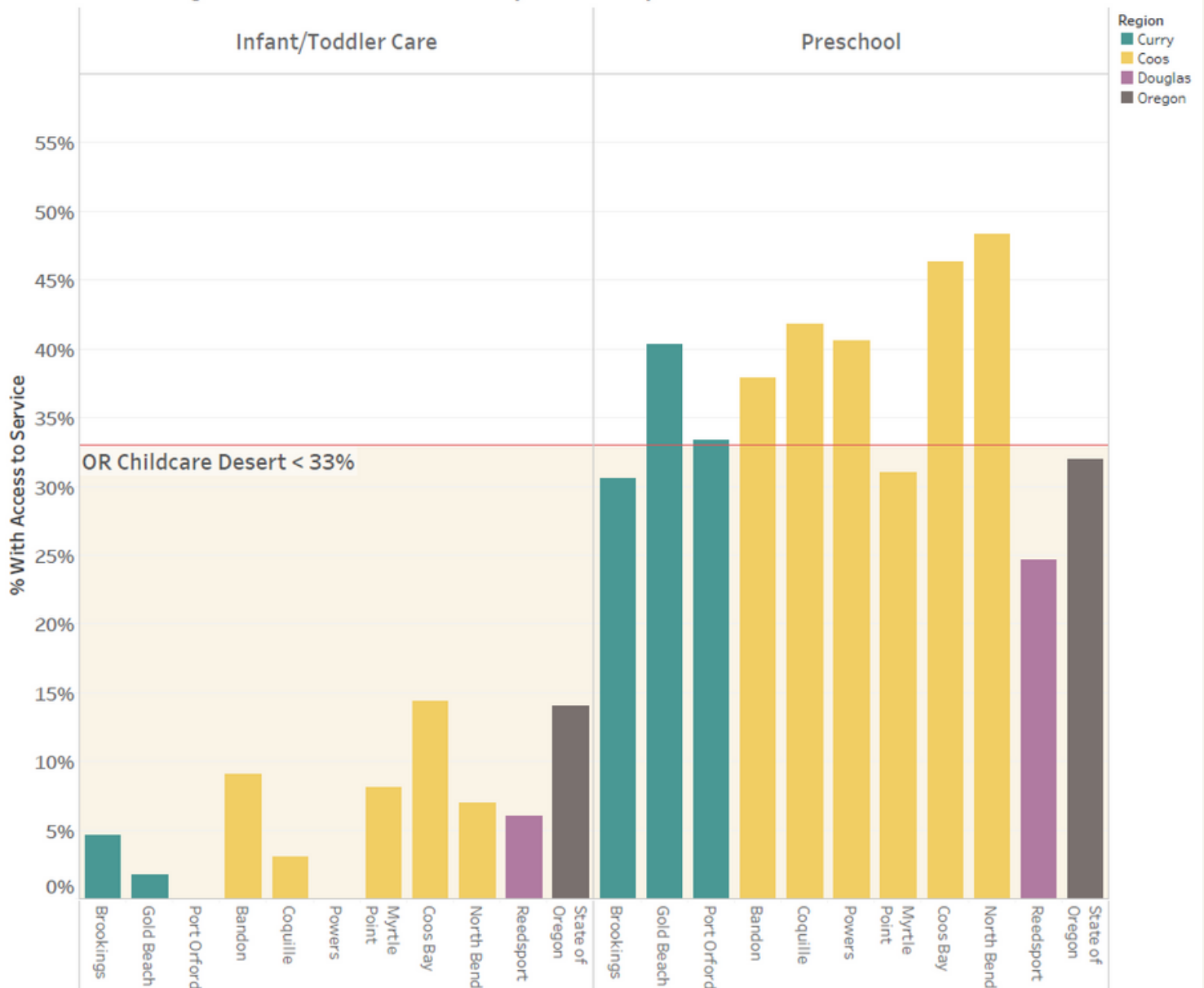
## The Family Perspective:

- Affordable care is the highest need. The lack of access to high-quality affordable early care and education means families are forced to make difficult choices and compromise working or attending school.
- Extended care, drop-in, and flexible hours are all greatly needed options for families.
- Other needs identified by parents include trusted and trained staff, transportation, and smaller class sizes.

## The ECE Workforce Perspective:

- Employment levels dropped severely during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Employment in ECE remains low and programs struggle to find qualified staff.
- Wages for the Early Care and Education workforce have been rising; however, they remain below a family living wage.
- Providers felt overwhelmed or burdened on the job, and without the skills they needed to effectively support or manage children's behavior.
- Statewide policies and practices create barriers for programs to operate including background check backlogs. ERDC reimbursement rates do not cover the cost of care.

SCREL Service Region: % Access to Child Care by Community 2022



# WE PROVIDE NAVIGATION

Specializing in program recruitment, eligibility, and enrollment, our team assists in a wide range of early learning programs. Our Family Navigator assists families in finding the perfect program fit for their young children to learn and grow.

11+

**The number of partner agencies participating in Coordinated Enrollment**

Baby Promise  
Preschool Promise  
Little Pirates Preschool  
Coastal Families Relief Nursery  
South Coast Head Start (SCHS)  
South Coast ESD  
Child Care Resource & Referral  
Pathways to Positive Parenting  
Local School Districts  
MOMS Program  
Oregon Department of Human Services

134

**Miles of coastal service**

From Reedsport to Brookings, our support is individualized to each community.

562

**The number of free infant and preschool slots on the South Coast**

We coordinate with partner agencies to understand their services and address community and family needs through a variety of program models and settings.

353

**The number of families we navigate into programs each year**

We work alongside families to find the program(s) that best suits their unique needs. Our experienced navigation team provides assistance and support throughout the recruitment, application, eligibility determination, and enrollment/referral process.

2,284

**The number of hours spent on navigation each year**

With specialized, contracted and full time staff, significant time is dedicated to connecting with families, and helping them find care.

# WE EMPOWER FAMILIES

**Parent Cafes and Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) are exceptional spaces that promote individual empowerment and family resilience.**

These groups are focused on connecting staff and parents in an authentic way that:

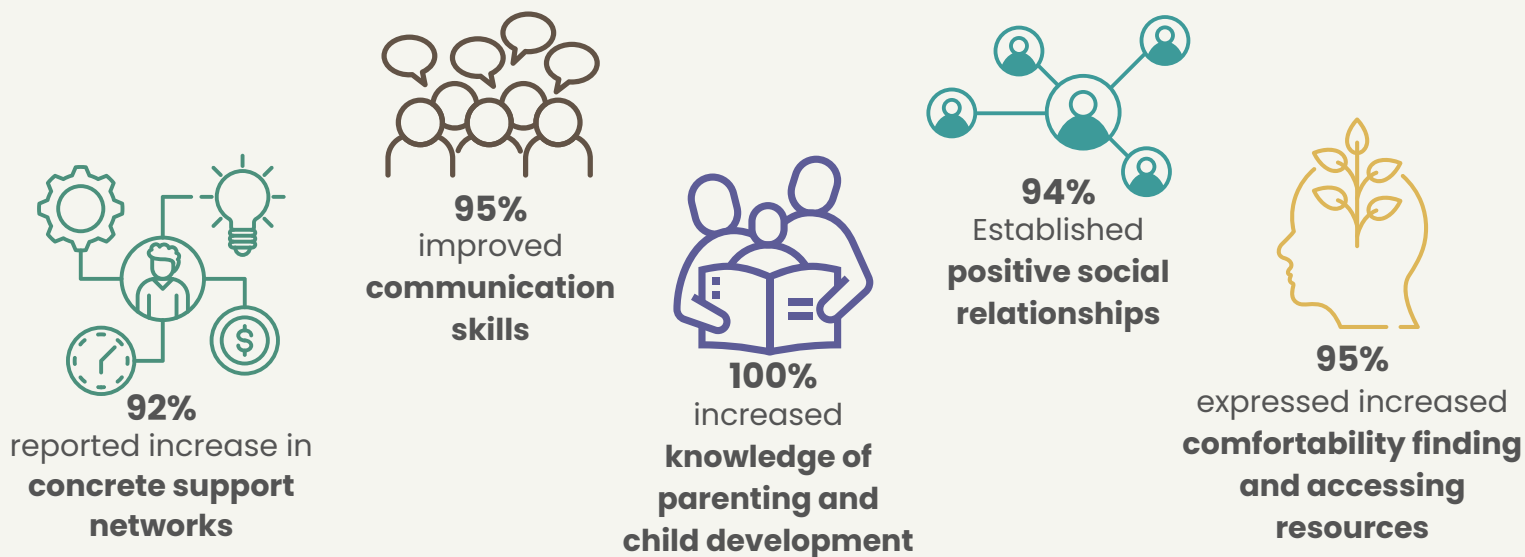
- Strengthens families
- Deepens engagement
- Builds parent leadership
- Increases community resilience

Our journey started with Parent Cafes. These safe spaces allow parents to authentically connect with one another to build resilience through research-based protective factors.

Caregivers from this group and the community were then recruited to join our Parent Advisory Council (PAC).

The PAC works towards immediate change and long term transformation within the community. This includes providing insight for and building relationships with community partners such as Advanced Health, Pathways to Positive Parenting, as well as our Early Learning Hub.

## What does the data say?



"I felt very supported and I truly appreciate everything you all do."

"It was raw and real and relatable... I really enjoyed this time with everyone tonight."

"It was great and I feel like I really got in touch with my emotions and took a lot away from this cafe as far as not feeling alone."

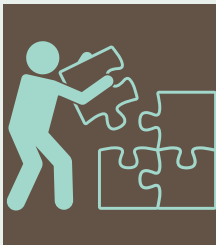
"I plan to do more to seek community supports and advocate for me and my family."



# WE ALIGN PRENATAL TO GRADE 3

Supporting 13 elementary schools across the region with a community-specific focus in Port Orford.

Our P-3 efforts are focused on research-based strategies that strengthen relationships between early learning providers, elementary schools, and families, to build a strong continuum of support for children from birth through early elementary school. This project is funded, in part, through our partnership with The Ford Family Foundation.



## SERVICE EXPANSION

Strategic initiatives to broaden services for families and children in Port Orford include an American Sign Language Play and Learn group, utilizing community buildings for childcare, and collaborating with partners to secure funding.

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## PROMOTING EQUITY

For two years, the P-3 coordinator has led a monthly Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Cohort of Curry County leaders.

Partnering with the Home Visiting System Coordination project to offer a monthly cohort model DEI Professional Learning Community (PLC) for early childhood educators, providers, and home visitors.

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## FACILITATING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Effectively connecting school districts and community partners with funding streams to improve access, enhance, and align early childhood programming.

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## COLLABORATING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Supported the establishment of new preschool classrooms in the Central Curry School District at Riley Creek Elementary through a mixed delivery partnership between the Central Curry School district and South Coast Head Start.

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Our organization serves as the hub connecting home visiting programs throughout the region. Our collaborative efforts are aimed at bolstering and broadening these programs, supporting professionals, and raising awareness and participation levels. This project is funded, in part, through our partnership with The Ford Family Foundation.

# WE COORDINATE HOME VISITING SYSTEMS

## Our Strategies:

- By maximizing funds and resources we collectively leverage dollars
- Focusing on communication and maintaining ongoing relationships between partners has built a foundation of trust, understanding and a greater sense of community
- We engage in common referral, intake, and information sharing to increase awareness of available services
- Combining efforts, funds and capacity allows us to access higher quality and specialized training that directly speaks to the needs of our workforce leading to improved skills of service providers and positive impacts in the quality of support families receive

**The heart and overall mission of this work is that regardless of which program families engage in, they receive high-quality support and services.**

\$148,869

In-kind & Leveraged Funds  
to Support Coordination  
Efforts & Projects

100%

Of partners agree that  
program leaders are  
effective at working together

90

Families served through the  
Group Connections Project:  
A Co-Operative Service  
between 6 Partners

46

Professional Development  
Opportunities Offered

84

Professionals from 21  
programs received quality  
targeted training

# WE INVEST

Funds from the Department of Early Learning and Care allow us to collaborate and innovate with local programs.

Focus Areas include:

- Family Support services
- Parent Education and Engagement
- Kindergarten Transition Programs
- Professional Learning Teams

## \$249,781

In 15 projects and programs

Serving over 1,215 kids and families

Impacting every community on the South Coast



# WE ADD CAPACITY

At SCREL, we believe that **community engagement** is key to our success. SCREL staff sit on **28 various community boards, committees, and councils**. By supporting the community, we get to learn about the gaps that could be filled to make our community even better. Check out a few of the amazing projects we've teamed up on.

## Coastal Families Relief Nursery

As a founding partner with United Way of Southwestern Oregon we are thrilled to have a relief nursery back in Coos Bay. Now its own 501(c)3, Coastal Families Relief Nursery partners with vulnerable families to identify their needs, set strength-based goals, and provide ongoing support using a holistic approach that includes therapeutic early childhood program classrooms, home visits, outreach services, and parent education programs. All services are free to families.

## Healthy Families Oregon

After a five-year absence, HFO is back, offering home visits that support and educate families. The South Coast Education Service District (SCESD) serves as the new backbone. HFO is a multi-site, state-accredited program that uses evidence-based home visits to boost attachment security and curiosity in kiddos.

## Welcome Baby Bags

In partnership with the MOMS Program at Bay Area Hospital, SCREL provides Welcome Baby Bags to Nurse Home Visitors to give to new families. The bags are full of supplies, resources, and activities to support families with newborns.

## South Coast Equity Coalition

In partnership with United Way of Southwestern Oregon and with the support of many other individuals and partners, our region now has a Regional Health Equity Coalition. The South Coast Equity Coalition is part of a statewide initiative serving as a bridge to historically underserved and underrepresented communities.

## Early Care and Education Apprenticeship

In partnership with the Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board (SOWIB), South Coast Head Start (SCHS), Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC), Umpqua Community College (UCC), and United Community Action Network Head Start, Coos, Curry and Douglas counties are the first in the state to have an ECE apprenticeship program!

## Diversity Summit

Each year SCREL partners with ODHS and the South Coast Equity Coalition to bring a full day of training to South Coast partners and individuals. Last year we had over 500 participants.

# GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

**Jeremy Skinner, Chair**  
**Margie House, Vice Chair**  
**Marie Simonds, Secretary**  
**Kyle Stevens, Treasurer**  
**Laura McKeane**  
**Ashley Matsui**

**Carol Hacherl**  
**Kristina Simpson**  
**Whitney Warr**  
**Taya Noland**  
**Wendi Baird**

## FUNDING PARTNERS

**The Ford Family Foundation**  
**Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care**  
**Coos County Systems of Care**

**WE THANK YOU**  
**FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN**  
**OUR VISION!**

