



OREGON EARLY CHILDHOOD SUMMIT

SUPPORTING ALL KIDS IN OUR PROGRAMS AND CLASSROOMS



Event Overview

Purpose

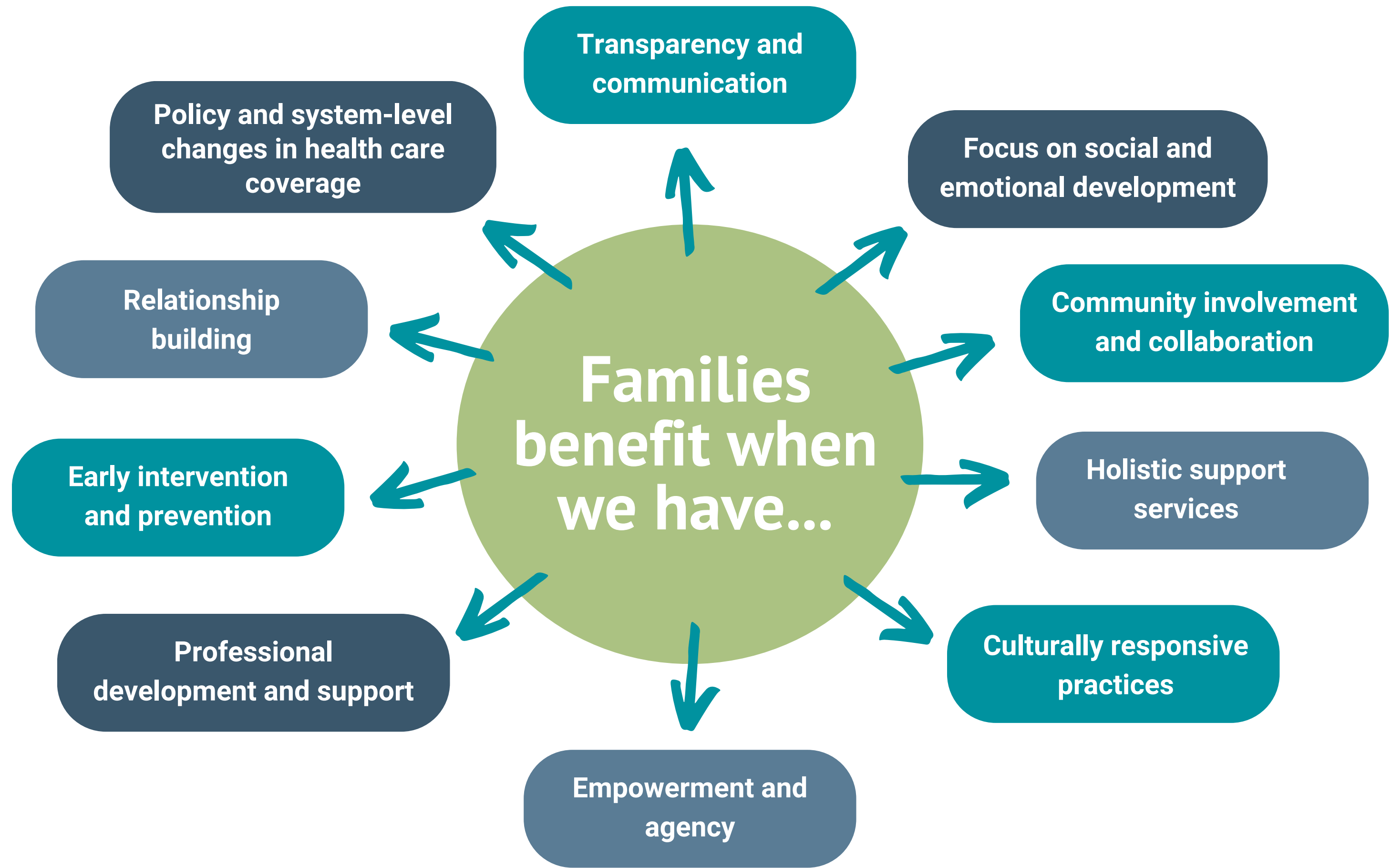
Early childhood lays the groundwork for a lifetime of well-being and success, making it imperative to prioritize social-emotional health during this critical period of development.

With this in mind, stakeholders convened the 2024 Oregon Early Childhood Summit to bring together partners from across early childhood, health & behavioral health, education and special education, advocacy, and philanthropy to build a shared **VISION** and **PLAN** for early childhood social-emotional health and to ensure all children are included in education and care.

Attendees

- 70 online
- 221 in person





Raise up Oregon Connection



Raise Up Oregon is Oregon's comprehensive state system plan for early childhood, prenatal to age five. The plan brings together government leaders from early care and education, public education, higher education, health, housing, and human services (Oregon Dept. of Early Learning and Care, 2024).

OBJECTIVE 2

Multi-agency partnerships are developed at the state and local levels to systematically support improved outcomes and streamlined access for all young children and their families.

OBJECTIVE 5

Families with young children are supported in knowing about and accessing a full range of services that meet their needs and are culturally and linguistically responsive.

- **5.2:** Expand navigators in a coordinated, efficient manner across the early childhood system.
- **5.3.3:** Connect families with Health-Related Social Needs coverage in Oregon Health Plan.
- **5.5.4:** Continue to monitor early childhood and kindergarten readiness metrics for coordinated care organizations (CCOs) to ensure children are getting access to needed preventive and screening services.

OBJECTIVE 6

Families with young children have increased access to economic supports.

OBJECTIVE 7

All families have access to support for their physical, social, emotional, behavioral, and oral health.

OBJECTIVE 12

Families have access to high-quality, culturally, and linguistically responsive birth-to-five social and emotional supports.

OBJECTIVE 14

Families have access to high-quality (culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate) and affordable early learning and care that meets their needs.

- **14.8:** Prevent suspension and expulsion in early learning and care settings through infant and early childhood mental health consultation and professional development supports.

Policy Barriers and Recommendations

FUNDING ALLOCATION AND STABILITY

Limited funding for early childhood education, mental/behavioral health services, and support programs poses a significant barrier to improving services. Insufficient and unstable funding may restrict the implementation of effective policies and programs, as well as hinder efforts to adequately compensate staff and maintain necessary resources.

RECOMMENDATION

Prioritize stable & adequate funding for culturally-relevant mental health and social-emotional support for both children and adults involved in their care. Stable and unrestricted funding is needed to support workforce wages, program implementation, and resources for families.

WORK UNDERWAY

- Improve maternal mental health & substance use disorder services
- Implement CCO child-level Social Emotional Health Metric
- Expand coaching (parents, childcare provide, home visitors, etc.)
- Continue implementation of Pyramid Model



Policy Barriers and Recommendations

FRAGMENTED SYSTEMS AND LACK OF COORDINATION

Fragmentation among agencies and programs hinder coordination and collaboration, leading to disjointed service delivery. Policy barriers that impede collaboration between different stakeholders and agencies prevents the sharing of information, resources, and best practices. Policies often focus on addressing specific issues or programs rather than taking a holistic approach that considers the interconnected needs of children and families.

RECOMMENDATION

Prioritize coordination and collaboration between different agencies, programs, and stakeholders to ensure culturally effective service delivery and a holistic approach to addressing the overlapping needs of children and families. Interdisciplinary teams can leverage their collective expertise to address complex social-emotional needs, promote integrated care models and cross-training opportunities.

WORK UNDERWAY

- Early Learning Council is one place where cross-sector conversations are happening.
- Coordination needed across Social Emotional Health Metric, Suspension & Expulsion Prevention Program, Oregon Early Childhood Inclusion, & Early Learning Success Initiative.
- Consider facilitated Improvement Science process - root cause analysis, driver diagrams and change ideas to test and guide the development, revision and continued fine-tuning of new tools, processes, work roles and relationships.
- Increased state agency transparency around how decisions are made.
- Look at what has been done, lean into and nurture what is working, giving it enough time to show change.



Policy Barriers and Recommendations

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The impact of systemic racism and bias within policies and systems, leads to disparities in access and utilization of services for underserved communities. Accessibility and inclusion barriers for families, particularly those in rural or underserved areas, as well as children with developmental delays and disabilities exacerbates disparities and limits opportunities for positive outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

Center the voices and experiences of underserved communities and support community-based solutions that address specific community. Address systemic racism and bias within policies and systems. Promote accessibility and engagement for all families, including those in rural areas and from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

WORK UNDERWAY

- Improve accessibility and inclusion in early childhood education and mental/behavioral health services. This involves investing in infrastructure to improve access to services in rural and underserved areas, implementing universal design principles to make services more accessible to children with disabilities, and promoting inclusive practices that embrace diversity and anti-racism.
- Partner with community based and culturally specific organizations already doing the work. Grants and capacity-building initiatives can empower communities to develop tailored interventions that reflect their unique strengths and priorities.
 - What system tables exist where community voice is needed? Invite them to the table.
 - Protect fragile partnerships that have started.



Policy Barriers

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Workforce issues, such as low wages, inadequate training, and high levels of burnout and turnover, hinders the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals in early childhood education and mental/behavioral health fields. This impacts the quality and continuity of care provided to children and families. Cumbersome systems and administrative burdens impede innovation, increase administrative costs, and detract from the focus on delivering quality services to children and families.

RECOMMENDATION

Elevate culturally specific agencies and services providing incentives for recruitment and retention, including increasing wages. Offer ongoing professional learning opportunities to support children's social-emotional development and mental well-being as well as mental health supports for educators and caregivers. Promote relational, trauma-informed, and culturally humble approaches among early childhood professionals. Streamline processes and reduce administrative burdens on providers, create greater flexibility, and alignment of policies with local needs.

WORK UNDERWAY

- Develop cross sector workgroup focused on workforce.
 - Review and consider action on the recommendations resulting from HB 2991 research project.
 - Review and consider action on the recommendations resulting from the HB 4151 subcommittee.
 - Secure funding for the early child educator scholarship program (ORS 329.181).
- Offer reflective supervision.



Conclusion

The 2024 Oregon Early Childhood Summit on Social-Emotional Health underscored the collective commitment of stakeholders to prioritize the well-being of children and families. By embracing the innovation and dedication of local communities who are the driving force behind meaningful change we can create lasting impact.

It's crucial to listen to and amplify the voices of those at the forefront of change. As we lean into community-driven solutions, let's ensure that our systems and agencies adapt to support and empower these efforts.



Together, by recognizing the power of community and fostering collaboration, we can build a brighter future for all.

Thank You!
¡Gracias!

