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# Serve & Return

*Brought to you by Colorado Project LAUNCH and LAUNCH Together*

**Welcome to the Serve & Return Newsletter** – your quarterly dose of all things early childhood mental health (ECMH) and social-emotional development with a special focus on progress and innovations across Colorado communities. Most are probably familiar with the [“serve & return”](#) metaphor and how important healthy interactions are in shaping the developing brain. Inspired by this powerful concept of connections, Colorado Project LAUNCH (COPL) and LAUNCH Together are partnering to share stories, learnings, and research with cross-sector champions. Just as neural connections are formed and strengthened over time, we hope to learn, collaborate, and communicate new ideas and strategies that spur action to advance the field of ECMH. Need a refresher on the history of COPL and LAUNCH Together? Check out the bottom of this newsletter for more information or contact [Katie Poston](#). Share Serve & Return with partners and colleagues by directing them to [LAUNCHTogetherColorado.org](#) to subscribe to the newsletter.

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## STORY OF IMPACT

***Stories of real life experiences ground us in the work we do. Learn how LAUNCH efforts are impacting children and families - and how children and families are impacting LAUNCH.***

**Shining the national spotlight on LAUNCH parent leaders.** Four Colorado parents attended the first national Family Leadership Summit in Rockville, MD in February 2018. This Summit, hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), was an exciting opportunity for LAUNCH parent leaders across the nation to build a network committed to strengthening early childhood social-emotional services and supports. Participants were selected through a competitive application process to identify family members eager to bolster their leadership skills and become change agents for their children and communities.

Princess Mack, Colorado Project LAUNCH Young Child Wellness Council co-chair and parent from Denver County, was credited for planting the seed for the Summit during her presentation at a 2017 grantee meeting. Anastacia Sandmeier, a LAUNCH Together parent representative from Chaffee County, was moved by the powerful stories shared at the Summit. She reflected "...it's not what you know, it's who you know. If you don't have a skill, if you don't have an answer, there is a good chance you can find someone in your network who can help you support families." Another Colorado representative, Anna Goad, LAUNCH Together Project Coordinator and parent from Fremont County, is already using the skills and knowledge from the Summit as she considers parent leadership in her community. "This network can be the solution for addressing the challenge of honoring the parent voice. Parents are underutilized. They DO know the system. Parents really are the experts," said Goad.

Mary Schmidt from the Colorado Project LAUNCH Young Child Wellness Council and parent from Denver County shared that her "ah-ha" moment came as she realized that this national network has the potential to harness the power of parent voices and strengthen their roles in motivating stakeholders at all levels to invest in the social-emotional well-being of young children. The four Colorado participants have plans to reconnect to take advantage of the momentum that was sparked in Rockville and identify next steps! For more information about the Family Leadership Summit, please contact [Ann Bruce](#).



### **SAMHSA Family Leadership Summit**

Right to Left:

Anna Goad, Mary Schmidt, Anastacia Sandmeier, Princess Mack

February 20 - 22, 2018

Rockville, MD

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## **COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS**

*Communities are laboratories for creative problem-solving. See how communities are implementing prevention and health promotion strategies to meet the unique needs of young children and families.*

**LAUNCH Together Communities Showcase Collective Work at Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Conference (RMECC).** Denver's Early Childhood Council and the Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance partnered to create two days packed with workshops and presentations designed to meet the professional development needs of early childhood practitioners, and foster learning, sharing,

and networking. At this year's conference, all four LAUNCH Together community leads representing Chaffee and Fremont Counties, Southwest Denver, Jefferson County, and Pueblo County shared insights and innovations from their local work guided by the [LAUNCH framework](#). They reflected on successes and lessons learned following the first year of implementation with an emphasis on how trauma, poverty, equity, and complex systems impact the social-emotional development of children and family well-being. Learn more about each LAUNCH Together community's [unique approach](#) to advancing early childhood mental health.

**Trauma-Informed Care at All Levels.** Following Weld County's federal Project LAUNCH grant, Dr. Noelle Hause led the Trauma-Informed Care Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project – an effort designed to provide a trauma-informed lens for child welfare caseworkers, behavioral health therapists, and judicial professionals. Funded by the [Caring for Colorado Foundation](#), the project's goal was to ensure that young children, prenatal to age eight, and their families involved in the judicial and protective services systems have access to trauma-informed systems and treatment services in Weld County. The training and consultation provided was modeled after the system of early childhood mental health consultation developed under Weld County Project LAUNCH, also known as the [Weld Systems Navigation Project](#). Partners included the 19th Judicial District, Weld Department of Human Services, Child Welfare, and North Range Behavioral Health. Fifty-eight key staff were identified across these agencies ranging from family judges and county attorneys, to child welfare professionals (screeners, intake, permanency, and kinship) and mental/behavioral health therapists. It became evident that trauma-informed care doesn't just positively impact children and families, but professionals who may be experiencing symptoms of secondary traumatic stress. Dr. Hause concluded that a trauma-informed approach is most effective when practiced at all levels of systems and organizations – a shift in practice that requires time, intentionality, and a recognition that human capital is the most valuable asset in building strong protective factors for individuals exposed to trauma. Learn more about this [innovative effort](#) or contact [Dr. Noelle Hause](#).

**Strong Partnerships Lead to Better Outcomes for Families.** [Clinica Family Health](#) is a federally-qualified health clinic with five locations serving Adams and Boulder counties, as well as a key partner in the local Colorado Project LAUNCH effort in Adams County. Clinica is committed to engaging with community organizations and clients to improve the health and well-being of their patients. Their experience in this was highlighted at a recent Winter Equity Symposium, hosted by the [Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County](#), where Judy Troyer, Vice President of Operations at Clinica, shared how the organization is taking action to more effectively coordinate support for their patients. Coupled with a shift in focus from physical health to whole-person health, Clinica recognized that strong partnerships and collaboration are necessary so *all* patient needs can be met. Clinica has strengthened service coordination through its participation in Project LAUNCH's Care Navigation effort.

The care navigator at Clinica and three other Project LAUNCH care navigators hold monthly learning collaboratives that allow for resource sharing, problem-solving, and discussions about how to increase support for families and young children in Adams County. It is through these navigation services that patients experience higher rates of success in follow-through to a developmental evaluation, receive referrals to support groups, and get connected to parenting/leadership classes. Troyer added that Clinica and other organizations, who are members of the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County, recognize that they are stronger as a county in meeting the needs of individuals if they do it together using the power of coordinated efforts. To learn more about Adams County's Care Navigation effort, contact [Rachel Hubbard](#).

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## TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

*Data is only useful if it is analyzed and communicated in a way that can improve day-to-day practice. We look forward to highlighting evaluation insights that inform continuous quality improvement efforts within communities.*

**A Deeper Dive into the Colorado Early Childhood Workforce Survey 2017: Challenging Behavior Findings.** Early childhood is a time of rapid brain growth, development, and learning. We know that high-quality early childhood education holds the potential for mitigating risks for academic and social difficulties and supporting positive development across socio-economic backgrounds. However, children's behavioral issues are a significant source of job frustration for many early educators, affecting their engagement with children, sense of personal well-being, and ultimately teacher turnover rates. This turnover impacts the financial bottom line of child care centers and family child care homes, as well as the

children in those settings. The findings from the survey are organized into a series of briefs, and those related to challenging behaviors are noted below.

- Teachers and family child care providers reported feeling underprepared to meet the care and learning needs of children with challenging behaviors, as well as children with special health and learning needs ([Brief #2](#)).
- 31% of directors noted an increase in children's challenging behaviors as a result of teacher turnover ([Brief #3](#)).
- 28% of teachers and 13% of family child care providers reported that children's challenging behavior was a significant source of frustration in their jobs ([Brief #5 & #6](#)).
- Family child care providers caring for more children with challenging behaviors experienced stronger feelings of depression and predicted greater depersonalization (e.g., psychological withdrawal) in their work with children and families ([Brief #6](#)).

Colorado communities, state agencies, nonprofits, and research institutions are leading the way in promoting children's social-emotional development and teacher well-being. However, there is still a need for greater investment in evidence-based programs to support early educators who care for children with challenging behaviors. Learn more about the [Colorado Early Childhood Workforce Survey 2017](#) and the accompanying report, [Bearing the Cost of Early Care and Education in Colorado: An Economic Analysis](#).

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## TRAININGS & EVENTS

*Be sure to save the date for upcoming partner events, trainings, and webinars this year.*

**Parent Possible Home Visiting Conference (April 25-27).** The [Parent Possible Home Visiting Conference](#) brings together home visitors and supervisors from Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPIY), both evidence-based home visiting programs focused on parent engagement. This conference provides home visiting specific training, professional development, and networking opportunities for over 200 participants from Colorado, neighboring states, and national experts.

**Trauma and Health Equity Summit (April 28).** The DAWN Clinic, in conjunction with the Fields Foundation, will host a Summit to explore the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how systems of care can respond to health problems in a more comprehensive manner. [Register](#) for the Summit.

**ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2 Training of Trainers Institute (June 18-20).** This year's [Institute](#) is being held in Denver, CO and is designed for intermediate to advanced users who already oversee ASQ implementation and training within their organization. Participants will leave the Institute prepared to score questionnaires, interpret and discuss results with families, work with families from diverse cultural backgrounds, and teach others within their organizations how to successfully use ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2. [Register](#) today to save; early bird pricing ends April 23!

**Colorado Health Symposium (August 1-3).** The [2018 Colorado Health Symposium](#), supported by the Colorado Health Foundation, is a national health conference that provides participants a chance to learn from and interact with cross-sector experts and dedicated professionals who are leading the way in addressing health equity. This year's theme, Addressing Equity in Behavioral Health, focuses on the complex ecosystem of behavioral health and the role that inequity plays, from prevention to recovery. Registration for the Symposium will open mid-May.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Reflective Supervision/Consultation Symposium (August 1-3).** The Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health and the Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health are pleased to bring you this year's [Symposium](#). This is an opportunity for mid-career and advanced infant mental health professionals to deepen their understanding of reflective supervision/consultation. Space is limited. Please contact [Jean Cimino](#) with any questions.

**Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children "It's All About Relationships" Conference (September 22).** The conference will be held in Durango, CO. COAEC is currently [accepting proposals](#) for presenters, and the deadline for proposals is May 15, 2018.

**Elevating Hope and Leadership: Strengthening Colorado Families and Communities Conference (September 26-28).** [Registration](#) is open for the [Illuminate Colorado's](#) 2018 Strengthening

Families Conference! Keynote speakers include Robert Sege, MD, PhD, Sarah Watamura, PhD, and Corey Best.

**ZERO TO THREE Conference (October 3-5).** The 2018 ZERO TO THREE Conference is being held in Denver, CO! Last year's event featured 96 information sessions, 236 top-notch speakers, 70 marketplace vendors, and more than 3,400 attendees. [Registration](#) is currently open.

**Recognizing the Impact of Bias Module now available.** Developed with funding from Colorado Project LAUNCH, this new course introduces the topic of conscious and unconscious bias and how these biases can impact relationships and interactions with children and colleagues. The course focuses on the importance of self-awareness in combating unconscious bias and helps individuals begin to understand how to recognize bias in themselves and others. To register for this free course, visit [Colorado Shines PDIS](#).

**SIM Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Module now available.** This [one-hour module](#) provides clinicians, medical assistants, office staff, and nursing and care managers with information about ACEs and toxic stress and tools that can be used to address ACEs in the primary care setting. Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit is available.

**Learn from Project LAUNCH Grantees Across the Country (archived webinars).** SAMHSA's Project LAUNCH Technical Assistance Center highlights each of the LAUNCH strategies with learnings from grantees across the nation. Two webinars are currently available for viewing: [Core LAUNCH Strategies: Focus on Enhanced Home Visiting](#) featuring work happening in Maryland and Georgia, and [Core LAUNCH Strategies: Focus on Mental Health Consultation in Early Childhood Education Settings](#) featuring work happening in Louisiana and the Cherokee Nation, as well as the Head Start National Center on Early Childhood Health & Wellness and the Center of Excellence for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation.

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## HELPFUL RESOURCES

*Check out timely resources and publications related to the [core LAUNCH strategies](#) and other relevant topics.*

**CDC Developmental Monitoring and Screening Resources.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) created a [central hub](#) of resources on developmental screening, with links to resources for both parents and providers. Resources include [Developmental Milestones](#), the CDC's mobile app, and checklists for parents.

**EarlychildhoodmentalhealthCO.org is live!** [EarlyChildhoodMentalHealthCO.org](#) was recently launched and provides videos, printable resources, and other information on infant and early childhood mental health. While the site was designed for early childhood professionals, it also includes resources and tips for parents and caregivers to support healthy development at home.

**Spanish Language Pregnancy-Related Depression (PRD) Public Awareness Campaign.** Pregnancy-related depression is depression that occurs during pregnancy or after giving birth, including after a pregnancy loss. In Colorado, more than one in ten women who give birth will experience signs and symptoms of depression, making it the most common complication of pregnancy. For women of color, rates of PRD could double the average for all women due to additional complex factors such as lower education and wage levels, and less social support. These are compounded by gaps in culturally- and linguistically- appropriate services in referral and treatment. The Spanish-language campaign builds on the existing English-language campaign that was launched in 2016, but was transcreated using results of a [market research project](#) with Colorado Latinas. Learn more about the [Spanish](#) and [English](#) campaigns and access free comprehensive [campaign materials and resources](#) for moms, families, and partners. Contact [Phuonglan Nguyen](#) for more information or if you know a local maternal mental health or health equity champion who would like to co-author a special Mothers' Day and Día de las Madres op-ed to compliment the public awareness campaign.

**Harvard Center on the Developing Child's Frontiers of Innovation Launches Urban Thinkscape.** Imagine if ordinary places like the bus stop, the corner market, or the sidewalk could become spaces for playful learning. That's the vision of [Urban Thinkscape](#), a program working with [Frontiers of Innovation](#) that transforms public spaces by infusing them with activities that challenge the mind while encouraging joyful ["serve and return" interactions](#) between children and caregivers.

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## COLORADO HAPPENINGS

*Learn about the latest state-level news and opportunities impacting early childhood mental health.*

**Strolling Thunder (May 8).** Decisions that affect babies and families happen at many levels of government, not only on Capitol Hill. That's why the [Colorado Children's Campaign](#) and [Clayton Early Learning](#) are partnering with [ZERO TO THREE](#) to lead Colorado's efforts to bring attention to the many issues that affect what babies, toddlers, and their families need to thrive through the #ThinkBabies campaign! Pack up your strollers and join partners on May 8 for a stroll around the Capitol followed by a huge play date for babies, toddlers, and families. [Strolling Thunder](#) is a fun, family-friendly rally to encourage policymakers to Think Babies™ in support of stronger families, vibrant communities, and prosperity across the country!

**Colorado Children's Campaign 2018 KIDS COUNT Communications Toolkit.** Looking to spice up your social media or newsletter content with community data from the [2018 KIDS COUNT](#) report? Colorado Children's Campaign developed a helpful [communications toolkit](#) with ready-to-use sample social media posts, talking points, and newsletter content.

**Rocky Mountain PBS Survey.** Rocky Mountain PBS developed an [online survey](#) to gather feedback about the services they offer families and to learn how to better support the early childhood community. Enter to win a Safeway gift card, and make your voice heard!

**Lend Your Voice to BeHeardMileHigh.** [BeHeardMileHigh](#) is a project of The Center for African American Health that is devoted to gathering the wisdom and knowledge of Metro Denver's African American residents and creating a unified voice that will be used to improve our communities and build healthier infrastructures. You can encourage community members, regardless of their racial background, to sign up for their confidential [online survey](#).

**Informing Legislators About Suspension and Expulsion Alternatives.** Teachers participating in the Teach Plus Colorado State Policy Fellowship are seeking more information about current discipline practices across Colorado to help inform lawmakers about the impact of legislation addressing early childhood suspensions and expulsions. How widespread is the use of these alternative approaches? Are teachers aware of these alternatives? Additionally, how prepared and supported do teachers feel in the implementation of these approaches? This [survey](#) takes less than five minutes to complete and responses will remain anonymous. Colorado teachers who complete this survey will be entered into a drawing to win one of four \$25 Amazon gift cards. For questions about this survey, please email [research@teachplus.org](mailto:research@teachplus.org).

**DC:0-5 Train the Trainer.** The Office of Early Childhood is exploring opportunities with ZERO TO THREE to bring a DC:0-5 "train the trainer" event here to Colorado! The DC:0-5 – Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood – training has quickly become an indispensable resource for mental health clinicians, consultants, early interventionists, and researchers. This strategic partnership is a big step forward to creating a sustainable way to build the capacity of Colorado's early childhood mental health workforce. More information coming soon!

**Public Policy Engagement in Early Childhood Across Colorado.** A member of the [Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program, Cohort 10](#) developed a brief survey to learn more about the extent to which all voices are engaged in the public policy process in early childhood across Colorado. Complete the [survey](#) today to inform stakeholder engagement strategies and tools!

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## Grant Opportunities & RFPs

*Stay connected to relevant funding opportunities and announcements.*

**The Get Grounded Foundation Announces Call for 2018 Nonprofit Grant Applications (due April 30).** [GroundFloor Media](#) (GFM) and its sister agency, [CenterTable](#), announced a call for Spring 2018 [grant applications](#) by Denver-area nonprofits serving at-risk youth. Created in 2015 as the primary charitable giving arm of GroundFloor Media and CenterTable, the 501(c)(3) provides one-year grants for new, entrepreneurial programs within an existing nonprofit that directly support at-risk or neglected

children and youth ages 3-15 in Denver.

**Refugee Family Child Care Microenterprise Development Program (due May 15).** The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the Administration for Children and Families invites eligible entities to submit competitive [grant applications](#) for funding under the Refugee Family Child Care Microenterprise Development (RFCCMED) program. Through the RFCCMED program, ORR will provide funding for applicants that will provide refugee participants with training and technical assistance in professional child care, microenterprise development, and financial literacy; assist refugee participants in navigating the child care licensing process; and provide direct financial assistance as needed to enable participants to prepare their homes for child care business operation.

**The Colorado Health Foundation Rapid Response Funding Opportunity: Advocacy.** The Advocacy Rapid Response [funding opportunity](#) aims to fund short-term advocacy initiatives (three-to-nine months in length) that ensure Coloradans' interests and priorities are front and center in shaping policy decisions that will have long-term impacts on creating health equity in Colorado. Applications are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis.

**Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) Seeks Communications Consultant to Develop Stories of Impact.** Would you or someone you know be a perfect fit for this exciting opportunity to with [ECPAC](#)? Submissions for the [Communications Consultant Request for Qualifications](#) are due April 25, 2018. Share with your networks!

[Project LAUNCH](#) is a national effort funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with the goal of improving social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive outcomes for young children (birth through age eight) and their families. Colorado is fortunate to have received two federal Project LAUNCH awards: Weld County Systems Navigation Project (2010-2015) and Colorado Project LAUNCH, or COPL (2014-2019). COPL represents partners across the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, JFK Partners at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, and the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC). LAUNCH Together, inspired by the experiences and outcomes of Project LAUNCH, was created through a unique collaboration of eight Colorado-based foundations. Through this private funding, four communities across the state are supported in enhancing early childhood mental health prevention and promotion practices and building coordinated community systems.

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