



Community Learning Report: Pueblo County

January 2021



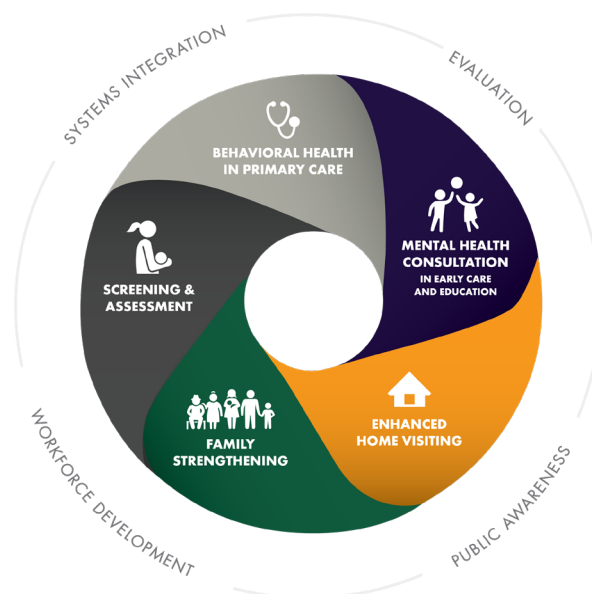
EARLY MILESTONES
COLORADO

earlymilestones.org/launch-together

About the Initiative

LAUNCH Together is a unique partnership between Early Milestones, eight Colorado-based foundations, the Butler Institute for Families, and communities throughout the state. The initiative is designed to improve social-emotional and developmental outcomes for Colorado's young children and families, support system-level collaboration, and reduce mental health disparities among vulnerable populations.

For more information about the history and implementation of LAUNCH Together in Colorado, visit earlymilestones.org/launch-together.



About the Community

LAUNCH Together Pueblo County partners (the Community) focused on improving the social-emotional well-being of young children and their families in the City of Pueblo's three poorest neighborhoods. Westside, Eastside, and Bessemer combined are home to about half of Pueblo's youngest children. The Community promoted the early identification and assessment of needs by building a broader understanding of the importance of healthy early childhood development and nurturing new partnerships.

To learn more about LAUNCH Together Pueblo County, please contact Lindsay Reeves, Director of Early Childhood Programs, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pueblo: lreeves@pueblocharities.org.

LAUNCH Together Pueblo County Partners

Catholic Charities Diocese of Pueblo

Children First

Pueblo Child Advocacy Center

Health Solutions

Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment (PDPHE)

Pueblo County Department of Human Services (PCDHS)

St. Mary Corwin Medical Center—Southern Colorado Family Medicine

Community in Action

Behavioral Health in Primary Care

Additional behavioral health supports were added at Southern Colorado Family Medicine to create a truly integrated care experience.

- Working together, a family development specialist and HealthySteps specialist screened for trauma and resiliency during well-child and prenatal visits. If needed, appropriate referrals to further supports were made, including home visitation and family strengthening programs.
- A child-parent psychotherapy trained mental health consultant was added to the care team to provide integrated services to young children and their families.

Enhanced Home Visiting

Home visitors employed by Catholic Charities were provided regular time to meet with an early childhood mental health consultant for reflective supervision and case consultation.

- Home visitors received professional feedback and consultation, reducing burnout. When needed, brief and direct interventions were provided to families. Home visitors and consultants were able to make direct referrals to Health Solutions for more intensive behavioral health services.
- Case consultation offered space for home visitors to discuss observations of clients' homes and family dynamics. This improved home visitors' awareness of social-emotional challenges facing families and ability to recommend appropriate supportive services.

Screening & Assessment

A new multi-agency Developmental Screening Workgroup, led by PDPHE, created and provided technical assistance for a shared decision-making tool for community-based providers.

- This tool provided clear and reliable information about where and how to refer for services. The result was increased screenings and more timely referrals to needed services.
- Pueblo's Safe Baby Court used this tool to improve screening efficiency. Families with court-mandated activities also experienced more successful services.

Mental Health Consultation in Early Care & Education

A strengthened partnership between Health Solutions and Children First resulted in a continuum of services for providers, including training, coaching, and mental health consultation.

- Expanded services led to 33% of all young children within the Community being reached with supports. This included 90 classrooms with embedded coaches and consultants.
- Health Solutions and Children First developed a new policy to make mental health consultants available to families and staff before a child is expelled or suspended from an early care and education center.

Family Strengthening

Parents and caregivers now have access to more information about their child's social-emotional development. Partners have also coordinated efforts to make families with young children more self-sufficient.

- The Early Minds Matter website (earlymindsmatter.org) was created to provide trustworthy information to parents and caregivers on early childhood development and related topics.
- Bridges Out of Poverty was established at two local elementary schools to build skills and knowledge toward increased self-sufficiency for parents. This effort led to better attendance and behavior in school.

Local Lessons



POWER OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE.

It is important for a wide range of programs and initiatives to understand and address the effects of past trauma and work to prevent future trauma.



AVOID COMMUNITY BURNOUT.

Streamlining outreach efforts and evaluation activities help to prevent individual and organizational burnout, especially during times of crisis.



SYSTEM CHANGE REQUIRES FOCUSED & SUSTAINED EFFORT.

Clear, consistent, and honest communication builds trust among partners and is essential for a collective approach to improving shared outcomes.



INTEGRATING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TAKES TIME & COMMITMENT.

Success depends on leadership from experienced partners. It is also critical to secure the commitment of medical champions and health care payors.

Next Steps

- The Maternal and Child Health Action Plan being developed by PDPHE in 2021 will be supported by the Community's system alignment and collaboration efforts.
- Through strong relationships, Community partners are well-positioned to respond to future collaborative funding opportunities.
- Based on lessons learned from responding to COVID-19, Community partners are committed to meeting families where they are and directing services to those most in need.
- Building upon existing relationships, the Community is exploring ways that services can be delivered with even greater collaboration.
- Partners will continue outreach to further engage schools and health care providers.

Initiative Funders



The Colorado Health Foundation™

