



Washington State Department of
Early Learning

Kids' Potential, Our Purpose.

PARENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Presentation to ELAC

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**“Together, with
parents and
partners, we offer
children world-
class learning
opportunities so
they reach their
full potential.”**

Jone M. Bosworth, JD
Director



Purpose

- ❑ To enable DEL to better understand parent and family priorities, issues, strengths, and challenges.
- ❑ To identify ways that DEL can support families by providing information, skills, and services they desire as they nurture and educate their young children.
- ❑ To assist DEL in setting priorities and allocating future resources in ways most likely to support parents.



Underlying Principles

- ❑ Use parents' expertise as children's first and most important teachers to inform DEL's work.
- ❑ Build on earlier research on parents in Washington.
- ❑ Focus on questions that have direct implications for DEL's decisionmaking.
- ❑ Obtain a sample representative of the state.
- ❑ Obtain information on special subpopulations.
- ❑ Include diverse families.



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Methods

- ☐ Phone survey
- ☐ Focus groups



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Survey Topics

- Information from parents of children up to age 6 about:
 - ▢ Ideas and preferences they have about healthy family development and early learning of children.
 - ▢ Types of programs, services, information, and supports they use, prefer, and would like to access.
- Variations in preferences by different ages, participation in different early childhood programs, and membership in different subpopulations.



Survey Development

- ❑ Review of past research
 - ▣ Solicited information from more than 50 organizations throughout the state.
 - ▣ Reviewed relevant information collected to date by DEL and other stakeholders on parental strengths, needs, and interests in supports, services, and information.
- ❑ Selection and development of items
- ❑ Review of draft surveys by DEL team
- ❑ Pilot testing, translation, IRB review
- ❑ Training of interviewers (LHK Partners, Inc.)



Survey Sample

- ▣ 1,000 parents overall
 - ▣ 700 parents Statewide
 - ▣ Children's ages (0-17 months, 18-35 months, 3 through 5 years)
 - ▣ Poverty status
 - ▣ Geographic distribution (urban and rural)
 - ▣ Primary language (English or Spanish)
 - ▣ 200 Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy families
 - ▣ 100 Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) families



Recruiting Strategies

- ❑ Random-digit-dialing (RDD) sampling method (n=700)
- ❑ Letters to targeted populations
 - ▢ WCCC (n=200)
 - ▢ ECEAP (n=100)
- ❑ Incentives (drawing for twenty \$50 gift certificates)





Weighted Data

- ❑ Data will be weighted to be representative of the statewide population and subpopulations.
- ❑ Weights will be used to correct for under- and overrepresentation of various demographic subgroups.
- ❑ Weights will correct for membership in more than one subgroup.
- ❑ SRI has used weighting procedures in many national and state studies.



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Other Data

- ❑ Ten focus groups
- ❑ Five areas of the state
- ❑ These expand the conversation to a broader range of parents.



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Timeline

- ❑ Survey data collection (January 15 – February 15, 2008)
- ❑ Focus groups (March)
- ❑ Preliminary findings: Data set and tables (April 20)
- ❑ Final report (June 15)



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Questions



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