



# Thrive by Five Washington

*Every Child is a Work of Art*

## About Us

Thrive by Five Washington is a public/private partnership that brings together people, resources, and proven programs and practices – from around the state and around the world – to help create the early learning supports, services and system Washington families need. We also do everything possible to communicate and champion the importance of learning that’s occurring between birth and age 5.

To this extent, Thrive is establishing demonstration communities in White Center and East Yakima that have the potential to serve as models for how communities can create a network of high-quality, integrated and sustainable early child care and education services that better support parents.

We are also working statewide on a network of infrastructure, policies and planning efforts that will form the foundation of a coordinated early learning effort in Washington.

Finally, we are implementing a public awareness effort on early learning to generate public support for changing early learning policies, increasing resources to parents and caregivers, and ensuring that all children have the best early learning opportunities.

## Additional Information

Thrive’s board of directors created a strategic review committee in November 2008 to better define the organization’s mission and focus the organization’s program work. The board will consider a set of three goals for Thrive at its March board meeting. These draft new goals include:

- Goal #1: Increase public awareness and knowledge, so that the importance of early learning is understood and supported by parents, caregivers, policy makers and community members.
- Goal #2: Increase understanding of the specific early learning programs and practices that are most beneficial to children and identify ways to make them more readily available.
- Goal #3: Advance policy development and partner with others to build services and systems that improve child development and school readiness.

## Our Mission

Thrive by Five Washington mobilizes public and private partners to advance development and learning for children ages birth to 5.

“There are few opportunities in life when all people can come together around one single issue. This is one of them. We’re counting on Thrive by Five Washington to help the whole state see that the first five years matter so much — and that we all have a joyful obligation to give children the best start in life possible.”

Jackie Bezos  
*Thrive by Five Washington Board Member*  
*Bezos Family Foundation*

## Learning Labs

Leading Change for Children

# Key Initiative Components

## Increase public awareness and knowledge

- Created and lead the Early Learning Communications Roundtable, which brings the state's major early learning organizations together to collaborate on messaging, campaigns and materials in order to provide consistency in public outreach. Roundtable sponsored state's first workshop on early learning for members of the media statewide.
- Coordinate the state's nine Born Learning Washington communities. Born Learning reaches out to parents in individual communities with information about how learning happens during every day moments. Worked with Born Learning communities throughout the state to create "champions" – people who advocate on behalf of children with community leaders and legislators.
- Entered into partnership with Belo Corporation to deliver a comprehensive early learning media campaign via the market's largest TV station and its sister properties beginning in 2009.

## Advance policy development and partner with others to build services and systems that improve child development and school readiness

- Created the Early Learning Partnership with the state Department of Early Learning (DEL) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as a way to better connect early learning to the K-12 education system.
- In coordination with DEL and OSPI, provided a recommendation to the state Legislature for a statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment process.
- Participated in DEL's Early Learning Advisory Council and helped initiate the work on the state's comprehensive early learning plan.
- Worked with DEL and five field-test communities to develop the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). As a result of state budget cuts, the full field test of the state's QRIS was suspended. Thrive is now using its private funds to conduct a modified field test of the state's QRIS model in the two Thrive Communities.

## Increase understanding of specific early learning programs and practices most beneficial to children; identify ways to make them more readily available

- Developed the two Thrive Demonstration Communities of White Center and East Yakima as "proof points" to demonstrate the impact of community wide early learning services on healthy child development and school readiness. The approach in the two communities is a holistic one and includes seven key strategies: home-based early learning (home visiting), quality rating and improvement system, informal caregiver supports (Family, Friends and Neighbors), Educare, Parent Engagement and Support, Community Engagement and Outreach and School Transition Activities. A new data-sharing agreement and data-management system also now allows families – with just a single sign-in – to receive services through referrals and be connected to a broad spectrum of service providers from health clinics, to birth doulas, to school districts, to child care centers.
- Support two Exemplary Practices:
  - The Culture of Literacy Initiative supports communities and families in promoting the literacy and early reading skills in children that set the foundation for school readiness and academic success. The planning stage of this initiative is complete and implementation will now begin at both the state and community level.
  - The Nurturing Families Initiative works to strengthen the parent-child bond – especially from birth to age 3 – by helping parents understand how brain development and social and emotional growth affect their children's school readiness and later success. It also provides parents with the tools and resources to help them do the best job possible. A group of state and national experts on social and emotional learning will help plan and design the initiative and evaluation plan.

## Key Stakeholders/Partners

Washington State Department of Early Learning • Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Educational Service District #105 • Puget Sound Educational Service District  
Public Health – Seattle / King County • Open Arms Perinatal Services • Child Care Resources  
Ready by Five • Council for Children and Families • Belo Corporation

## Contact Information—Project Leads

Nina Auerbach  
President & CEO  
nina@thrivebyfivewa.org

Brenda Blasingame  
Director of Programs  
brenda@thrivebyfivewa.org

Molly O'Connor  
Director of Communications  
molly@thrivebyfivewa.org