



Early Childhood Programs and Services (ECPS) is dedicated to the care, education, and healthy development of children, from birth through elementary school age. ECPS collaborates with early childhood professionals, families, schools, and community partners to support children in reaching their fullest potential. In partnership with the community, schools, and county, ECPS coordinates the implementation of the Fairfax County Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan (ESRSP).

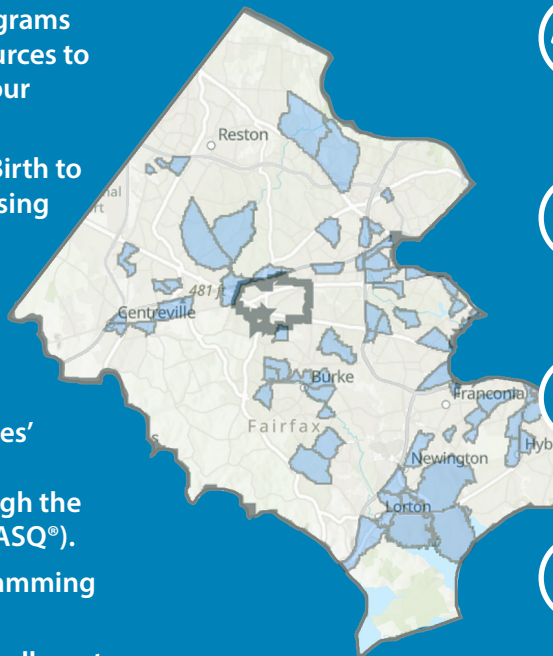
Providing access to affordable, quality early childhood education is a two-generational strategy

which supports parents' workforce participation while also preparing young children for lifelong success. Young children who begin kindergarten with a strong social, emotional, and cognitive foundation are more likely to do well in school, become employed and less likely to experience negative health factors. Expanding the County's equitable early childhood system advances the goal of the Board of Supervisors to ensure that every child in Fairfax County has equitable opportunities to thrive.

Expanding and Increasing Access

During FY2023 Early Childhood Programs and Services (ECPS) utilized its resources to expand and increase access within our communities by:

- Expanding the Virginia Quality Birth to Five program (VQB5) and increasing the number of CLASS® certified observers.
- Developing interactive maps showing gap areas for child care programs.
- Expanding educators' and families' use of developmental and social emotional screening tools through the Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®).
- Increasing part time PreK programming throughout the County.
- Increasing child care subsidy enrollment.



\$1.4M

In additional federal funding to expand community child care services.



Family Council

Established a Family Council to increase family's voice.



2,771 Observations completed for VQB5 in Capital Area*
665 early childhood programs participated in Capital Area in FY23.



5,800

Number of children served in the Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR).

* Summer and Fall FY23

ECPS Aligning Strategies with Goals and Making IMPACTS!

ECPS has aligned the Fairfax County Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan strategies with our Department of Neighborhood and Community Services Goals:



NCS GOAL: Promote community and belonging.

ESRSP Strategies:

Nurture a whole community commitment to school success for all children.

ESRSP Actions:

Established Access and Family Partnerships.

IMPACTS:

- Increased community involvement and raised family's voice.

NCS GOAL: Expand access to programs and services.

ESRSP Strategies:

Provide equitable offerings of high-quality early development and learning experiences and related school readiness supports throughout the county.

ESRSP Actions:

- Child Development Associate credential support for Education Professionals.
- Expansion of Early Childhood Programs.
- Partnership for offering part-time Pre-K experiences.

IMPACTS:

- Increased developmentally appropriate practices for child care Educators.
- Increased number of child care opportunities through federal grant and part time Pre-K partnership.
- 5,800 children were served by the Child Care Assistance and Referral Program (CCAR).
- Served over 500 children in Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) Community Programs.

NCS GOAL: Support health and wellbeing.

ESRSP Strategies:

Establish meaningful partnerships with families to grow school readiness opportunities in all communities and support children's optimal development in all settings.

ESRSP Actions:

- Established Access and Family Partnerships.
- Expanding ASQ® Initiative.
- Meeting Head Start benchmarks.

IMPACTS:

- Partnered with community to establish Family Council.
- Increasing awareness and use of ASQ® and early identification/ interventions.
- Ready Region Capital Area (RRCA) completed 2,771 observations for quality interactions at 665 child care programs in the RRCA.
- Head Start Benchmarks FY23:
 - 93% of 4-year-olds reached benchmarks in social-emotional skills.
 - 91% of 4-year-olds reached benchmarks in literacy and language skills.
 - 89% of 4-year-olds reached benchmarks in math skills.

NCS GOAL: Facilitate economic security & resiliency.

ESRSP Strategies:

- Provide equitable offerings of high-quality early development and learning experiences and related school readiness supports throughout the county.
- Promote equity-focused planning and decision making, shared accountability, by using data.

ESRSP Actions:

- Institute for Early Learning (IFEL), CEPS and VQB5 coordination of trainings to support VQB5.
- Targeted and meaningful training opportunities offered.
- Early Childhood Supply and Access Gaps map

IMPACTS:

- 2,857 Educators received training from the ECPS IFEL.
- Provided technical assistance to 832 locally permitted family child care homes.
- Used access gap map to inform capital improvement plans for child care programs.

ECPS focuses on the Fairfax County Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan Goals

All children are **READY.**
 All families are **READY.**
 All professionals are **READY.**
 All schools are **READY.**
 Our community is **READY.**

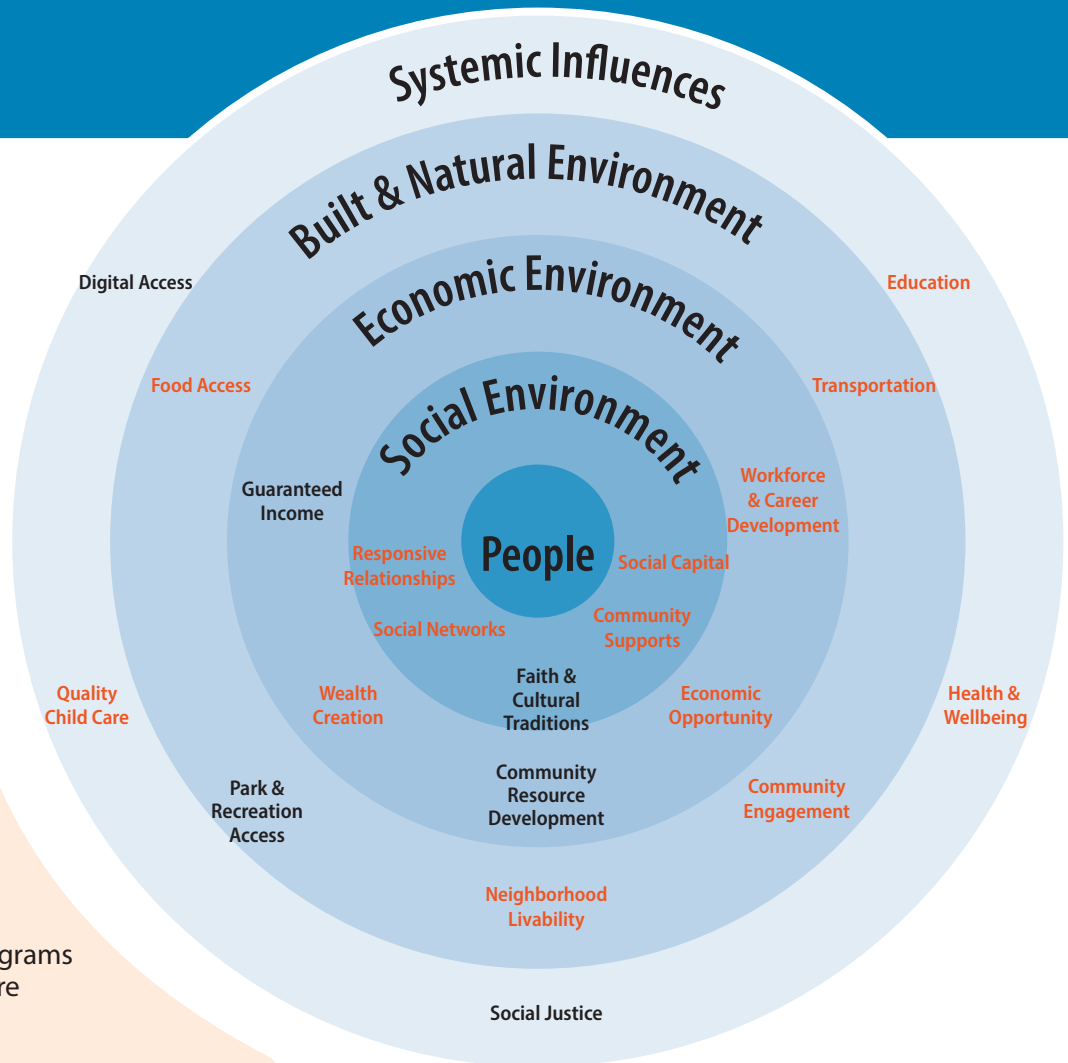
Following the NCS Model for promoting healthy environments, each of the programs under ECPS serve a role in providing access to affordable, quality early childhood education that supports parents' workforce participation while also preparing young children for lifelong success.

Systemic Influences

- Quality child care by building a unified early childhood system through the Ready Region work.
- Health and wellbeing incorporated in our Head Start and VPI program standards.

Built & Natural Environment

- Food access through the USDA program for family child care providers.
- Offering transportation services to our early learners in the Head Start Center.
- Community Engagement through family councils.
- Neighborhood livability through our assistance programs and increasing the child care business.



Economic Environment:

- Workforce and Career Development and wealth creation through building child care business training and working with the Women's Business Center.
- Economic Opportunity through financial assistance for child care.

Social Environment:

- Responsive relationships between early childhood educators and children using the CLASS tool that focuses on teacher child interactions.
- Community supports such as professional development to early childhood educators.
- Social capital by providing families with child care financial assistance.

SURVEY SAYS . . . “You Are Awesome!”

It really does, take a look:

CCAR	Percent of survey respondents satisfied with service received from CCAR.	97%
CEPS	Percent of survey respondents satisfied with service received from CEPS.	98%
IFEL	Percent of early childhood educators survey respondents that were satisfied with trainings / courses from the Institute for Early Learning (IFEL).	94%
Head Start	Percent of survey respondents satisfied with service received from Head Start.	100%



What our families have to say!

A CCAR client recently shared that her family—including her two daughters—had faced significant challenges and countless obstacles for years, including homelessness, transportation issues and unemployment. For her,

“the only constant thing that has always remained is Early Childhood Programs and Service’s (ECPS) support, helping me with affordable child care while I pull myself up after every hurdle that’s been placed in front of me. I can’t put into words how much that has meant to me.”

She credited the case managers with making sure she turned in her recertification on time. The support from CCAR and ECPS enabled her to attend school, participate in training to obtain IT certifications, and ultimately secure a position as a Computer Software Integration Analyst for the federal government. She concluded, **“You all have made a big impact in my life and most importantly my children’s life by helping their mom be able to finally take care of them on her own.”**

Partner Engagement

ECPS leverages the work with our local, state and non-profit partners to support our Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan goals.

- In FY23, ECPS worked with our non-profit partner Fairfax Futures to increase developmentally appropriate practices for child care Educators using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire®.
- In collaboration with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) and the Virginia Department of Education, ECPS led the Ready Region Capital Area to support building a unified early childhood system in the community.
- Continued the close partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools to implement Ready Regions work, Head Start and coordination to increase early childhood access in the County.

