



Early Childhood Systems Governance



Children's
Advocacy
ALLIANCE

A Comprehensive Early Childhood System (ECE) is Crucial

The first five years of a child's life are crucial to their long-term success. A comprehensive early childhood system aims to provide a seamless, unified, and coordinated approach to early childhood development, recognizing how various factors (health, safety, learning, etc.) influence a child's well-being and potential must work together. This approach is crucial in setting the stage for a child's future success by addressing their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development during these formative years.

Nevada's Current Early Childhood System

In Nevada, three primary departments administer and oversee early childhood programs and services: the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, and the Department of Agriculture. Within these departments, funding, and services are administered through numerous State divisions, offices, and non-governmental sub-recipients or contractors.

Nevada's current early childhood system is siloed and lacks sufficient coordination to ensure families access the services they need. For example, WIC, Medicaid, SNAP, childcare subsidy, and more have nearly identical eligibility requirements, yet a family must fill out a separate application for each, and often are not informed of their eligibility for these benefits. Further, less than half of individuals eligible for the WIC program participate, highlighting the need for increased awareness and accessibility.*

A Comprehensive Early Childhood System Prevents Children from Falling Through the Gaps



Recommendation

Establish a temporary Office of Early Childhood Systems to develop a plan to coordinate and align Nevada's early learning and care, child health, economic well-being sectors.

Requirements, Roles, and Functions:

- Analyze and assess ECS governance structures and strategies.
- Convene key stakeholders to assess needs in developing an ECS governance structure.
- Meet with other jurisdictions that have experience in developing new early childhood governance structures to gain insight on identified strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities.
- Develop recommendations and a comprehensive plan to reorganize Nevada's ECS governance structure
- Provide staff support to the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Timeline: The Office shall be effective July 1, 2025 and sunset on or before October 1, 2029, unless otherwise directed by the Legislature.



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