

# **Oregon Foundation Programs and Initiatives: “Raise Up Oregon” Alignments March 2021**

This report summarizes current focused early childhood investments and initiatives of three of Oregon’s major foundations: The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF), the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation (Miller), and Oregon Community Foundation (OCF). Oregon foundations value collaboration, frequently partnering to address common priorities such as strategies to support our state’s youngest children and their families. Many of the initiatives are collaborative efforts, with several involving multiple funders.

Details about all programs and focuses listed briefly below are in the following pages.

## **Goal 1. Children Arrive Ready for Kindergarten**

### ***Health Care***

- Children’s Dental Health
- Early Childhood Behavioral Health Initiative

### ***Early Childhood Care and Education***

- Growing Master Trainers
- Betty Gray Scholarships for Education and Training
- Yoncalla Early Works – P 3 Initiatives
- Early Student Success: The Children’s Institute
- Child Care Shared Services Alliance Statewide Pilot
- South Coast Shared Services Alliance
- Rural Child Care Report
- Capital Grants to Child Care Businesses
- Child Care Business Pilot
- Reach Out and Read

## **Goal 2. Children are Raised in a Healthy, Stable and Attached Families**

- Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative
- Parenting Education-Health Care Partnership Initiative

### ***Home Visiting***

- Home Visiting Systems Coordination Program

### ***Child Welfare***

While not focused on early childhood, The Ford Family Foundation has numerous investments targeted to prevention of abuse and neglect of children of all ages.

### ***Housing***

Several foundations have focused efforts to address housing instability and homelessness among families in Oregon.

## **Goal 3. The Early Learning System is Aligned, Coordinated and Family Centered**

### ***Application and Data Systems***

- Oregon Child Integrated Database

### ***Early Learning System Coordination***

- Home Visiting Systems Coordination Program (see above)
- BUILD Initiative

# **Oregon Foundation Programs and Initiatives: “Raise Up Oregon” Alignments March 2021**

## **Goal 1. Children Arrive Ready for Kindergarten**

### ***Health Care***

#### Children’s Dental Health

OCF and several funding partners (A-dec, The Collins Foundation, The Ford Family Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, Meyer Memorial Trust, Northwest Health Foundation, Providence Health and Services and OCF advised fund donors) understand the importance of oral health for overall health and well-being. Together, we have invested in First Tooth Training for pediatricians to conduct oral screenings and apply fluoride varnish during well child visits for ages 0-5. We have provided over \$3.5M in funding to expand school-based dental health programs to serve elementary and middle school students across Oregon. OCF has also invested in the public policy effort to fluoridate Portland’s drinking water as it is the single most effective way to prevent tooth decay for all. (Unfortunately, it is still not fluoridated and other more expensive interventions are required to protect children’s teeth.) In addition, OCF has supported development and delivery of curriculum for parents of young children on the importance of oral hygiene and how to support it. Hundreds of parents have participated in workshops on this topic. This legislative session, OCF is sponsoring HB 2969 to ensure oral health education is part of the K-12 public education curricula.

#### Early Childhood Behavioral Health Initiative

Since 2016 TFFF has invested in early childhood behavioral health.

- Over 5 years of investment in the workforce with 40 full scholarships to early learning professionals across rural Oregon to participate in the PSU ITMH graduate certificate.
- 5 years investment in Oregon’s Infant Mental Health Association in support of the professional IMH- Endorsement resulting in 100 + endorsed professionals.
- Investment in a **2-year** + professional learning cohort in Douglas County to increase expertise, knowledge and build relationships across early learning sectors on behalf of early childhood.
- Robust early childhood mental health consultation model development in Douglas County.

### ***Early Childhood Care and Education***

#### Growing Master Trainers

A four-year initiative of several Oregon funders (The Collins Foundation, The Ford Family Foundation, Lora L. and Martin N. Kelley Family, Oscar and Elsa Mayer, Miller, and Oregon Community Foundations as well as Social Venture Partners, the Thrasher Family Fund of OCF, and the Portland Children’s Levy) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Growing Master Trainers has supported development and delivery of culturally-specific trainings for child care providers in communities of color statewide and in rural areas of Oregon. Many of the trainings and strategies were co-designed with community-based organizations. System change

recommendations based on learnings from the initiative are being presented to the Early Learning Division.

#### OCF Betty Gray Scholarships for Education and Training

Since 2003 OCF has funded two scholarship programs named for Betty Gray:

- The *Betty Gray Provider Training and Certification Scholarship* program helps family and center-based child care providers access training and complete professional development goals. The program is administered by Portland State University's Oregon Center for Childhood Care and Education. More than 10,000 scholarships have been awarded since the program's inception, with more than 50 percent of eligible applicants identifying as BIPOC.
- The *Betty Gray Community College Scholarship*, administered by the community college foundations in partnership with early childhood education programs, assists students who are pursuing degrees or certificates in early childhood with the intention of pursuing a career in the field. Nearly 1,500 students have received Gray scholarship assistance since 2004.

#### Yoncalla Early Works – P 3 Initiatives

Since 2012 TFFF has invested in Yoncalla Early works. It is a partnership between the Yoncalla School District and partners, Children's Institute and The Ford Family Foundation. It is a 10-year+, school-based demonstration project to learn how to connect rural families, early childhood programs, schools, and health services for children prenatal through age 8 in order to improve Kindergarten readiness and 3rd grade achievement.

#### Early Student Success: The Children's Institute

Launched in 2019, Early School Success (ESS) is a five-year initiative of the Children's Institute (CI). Funded by the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, the initiative provides school districts with the tools they need to offer developmentally appropriate aligned instruction to children from preschool through fifth grade.

- The goal is for communities to no longer experience preschool through elementary as two separate systems, but instead as one consistent and high-quality education experience. CI's approach to the ESS work draws on principles of human-centered design and improvement science to help school and district teams address root causes of educational inequity by strengthening research-based Early Education Essentials and establishing developmentally appropriate anti-bias and anti-racist educational strategies.
- During the first years of ESS implementation, CI focused on testing and improving content and strategies at partner schools within the Beaverton and Forest Grove School Districts. The ESS approach is collaborative and individualized to honor local school and community contexts.
- A primary goal of ESS is to engage staff and parents in co-identifying priority areas for improvement and co-designing solutions that can be implemented and tested. ESS also offered workshops with COSA providing sharing experiences and learning from ESS for interested districts. ESS is currently engaged in selecting districts for a rural-focused ESS Cohort to begin in Fall 2021.

#### Child Care Shared Services Alliance Statewide Pilot

Oregon Community Foundation funded a planning phase in fall 2020 that has led to February 2021 launch this winter of a multi-year statewide Shared Services Alliance (SSA) initiative funded by OCF and TFFF. The SSA model is an innovative approach to stabilizing and expanding the supply of quality child care, strengthening child care business and pedagogical

practices through centralized administrative processes, programmatic technical assistance and access to loan funding. Under the leadership of a statewide backbone organization, child care resource and referral agencies will coordinate local SSA networks in three pilot sites: Central Oregon, Southern Oregon (Jackson County) and Portland metro. The initiative envisions partnership with the business community, other foundations and the public sector in future years.

#### South Coast Shared Services Alliance

OCF has provided funding since 2019 for a pilot of the Shared Services Alliance model (Oregon's first implementation of this model) for child care providers in Coos and Curry counties. The Ford Family Foundation is contributing to the cost of some aspects of the program. The SSA now includes 7 providers, and expanded participation is planned for the coming year.

#### Rural Child Care Report

In 2020, TFFF commissioned a report on the economics of operating a child care business in Oregon. This report, titled, *Child Care in Rural Oregon: Bold Approaches to Address Systemic Inequity and Rebuild Child Care* (and its summary) can be found at [tfff.org](http://tfff.org).

#### Capital Grants to Child Care Businesses

In 2018, TFFF piloted a 3-county project in Douglas, Coos and Siskiyou counties to increase both the number of child care slots and the quality of care in rural settings. Capital grants of up to five thousand dollars were offered to 24 family child care providers. The pilot tested the hypothesis that relative minor and flexible capital dollars would lead to an increase in the number of children served and also increase provider's quality on the Quality Improvement System. This pilot has been largely successful and will be built upon in the future.

#### Child Care Business Pilot

In 2017, TFFF launched a child care pilot partnering the Small Business Development Center in Douglas County with the Child Care Resource and Referral to support a 15 child care provider cohort. The goal is to build small business skills and ability to have a profitable and sustainable business model while working on high quality practices.

#### Reach Out and Read

Several Oregon foundations and OCF advised fund donors have provided funding over the years to Reach Out and Read Oregon, the evidence-based early literacy program that is delivered during well-child check-ups. Funder dollars have supported the program's launch as a statewide program and helped with capacity-building and expansion to reach more clinics around the state.

## **Goal 2. Children are Raised in a Healthy, Stable and Attached Family**

#### Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative

The Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative (OPEC) is an initiative of four foundations -- The Collins, Ford Family and Oregon Community Foundations and Meyer Memorial Trust -- to expand access to parenting education programs for parents of children birth to age 8 and make parenting education a community norm. Oregon State University's Hallie Ford Center for Healthy Children and Families provides evaluation, data collection and technical assistance to grantees. Outcomes since 2010: establishment of 16 regional parenting education Hubs serving 35 of 36 Oregon counties and Siskiyou County, CA; parenting education is more visible, coordinated and integrated with other systems; thousands of parents have participated in programs; a new partnership with ODHS is bringing federal funding to the OPEC Hubs to

support delivery of evidence-based parenting education programs for parents of school-age children; Student Success Act (Early Learning Account) funds are supporting additional parenting education programs for parents of young children.

### Parenting Education-Health Care Partnership Initiative

Parallel to OPEC, this OCF-funded initiative is supporting projects that pilot strategies to reach more parents with parenting education via health care settings. The two pilot sites are in Lincoln County (grantee Samaritan Health Services) and Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties (grantee Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc.). Oregon State University is working with the grantees and OCF to collect data on outcomes of interest to the health care sector.

## ***Home Visiting***

### Home Visiting Systems Coordination Program

Since 2016 TFFF has invested in a three-region, 6-county, home visiting systems coordination program. Two are in Oregon (Douglas/Klamath/Lake and Coos/Curry) and one region/county is Siskiyou County California. The program in each region is nested in the Early Learning Hub or in California it is at First 5, the lead early childhood agency. The goals of the program are to:

- Improve internal communication amongst the home visiting programs and, externally, to other child- and family-serving agencies;
- To create a coordinated referral process; and
- To coordinate and provide shared professional development across home visiting programs.

In addition, TFFF has made workforce investment for home visiting including:

- Relief Nursery investments Infant Mental Health education and professional Endorsement statewide.

## ***Child Welfare***

- TFFF has been investing in the prevention of child abuse and neglect for over ten years. Funds are not limited to early childhood and support is spread across the prevention/invention continuum. In addition to program supports, investments are being made to build systems capacity, increase statewide awareness, and support innovations. The following is a list of the Foundation's current strategies, along with some example of programs/agencies being supported.
- Support Networks & Strengthen Public Policy (ex. Oregon Child Abuse Solutions, Oregon CASA Network, Our Children Oregon, Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force)
- Increase Community Awareness & Engagement (ex. Prevent Child Abuse Oregon, Protect Our Children, 90by30, TRACES)
- Reduce Stress & Provide Wrap Around Supports (ex. Home Visiting Systems Coordination, Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries, OPEC, Safe Families)
- Strengthen Intervention Supports (ex. Child Advocacy Centers, Safer Futures)
- Improve Outcomes for Children in Foster Care (ex. Every Child, Oregon CASA Network)

For more information, please contact TFFF.

### Protect Our Children

A project of The Ford Family Foundation since 2015, the goal of Protect Our Children is to build a powerful movement to prevent child sexual abuse in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. Through training led by local nonprofits, we are increasing community-level awareness of child

sexual abuse, its lifelong impacts, and the role of every adult in its prevention. Since launching in 2015, our network of 16 nonprofit partners, along with a pool of skilled community facilitators, have trained over 30,000 adults on how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

### ***Housing***

- OCF is working to improve access to affordable housing and shelters for people experiencing homelessness in Oregon. The Foundation is currently focused on Project Turnkey, an effort to provide \$65M in funding that it received from the state to nonprofits or other eligible applicants to acquire distressed hotels and motels in communities impacted by wildfires and across the state to repurpose them for non-congregate shelter. In some communities, families with children are first in line for these units.
- OCF is also working in partnership with The Ford Family Foundation and Meyer Memorial Trust to develop the Community Rebuilding Fund which will provide funding this year for communities impacted by the 2020 wildfires. A main concern has been the lack of affordable housing for families, particularly in Southern Oregon. Housing is critical for families to return to areas such as Phoenix and Talent.

## **Goal 3. The Early Learning System is Aligned, Coordinated and Family Centered**

### ***Application and Data Systems***

#### Oregon Child Integrated Dataset

TFFF, Miller and OCF, along with the Kelley Family Foundation, Kaiser-Permanente, United Way of the Columbia-Willamette and OCF advised funds, have provided funding to match State of Oregon support for development and utilization of the Oregon Child Integrated Database (OCID). OCID's inaugural analyses, examining relationships between select public childhood programs and early childhood educational outcomes, were released in February 2021.

### ***Early Learning System Coordination***

Home Visiting Systems Coordination Program (see above)

#### BUILD Initiative

Since 2018 Oregon's early childhood funders have helped make it possible for Oregon to participate in the national BUILD Initiative. As one of 12 BUILD states, Oregon has access to technical assistance from some of the nation's leading experts on effective state strategies and structures to advance strong early care and learning systems. The Early Learning Division has received support and guidance on strategic planning and governance; programs and systems to support equity; development of COVID-19 guidance; and early childhood mental health.