

## Policy Framework

The Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) policy framework outlines those strategic areas that have been prioritized for advancement by the ECAS network.

The framework has been aligned to team and network goals, and is intended to guide legislative agendas and policy recommendations for furthering Hawai'i's progress towards a comprehensive system of care for our keiki and 'ohana.

**GUIDING PRINCIPALS**

- A comprehensive whole-child/whole-family, multi-generational approach
- Culturally-responsive and inclusive practices
- Efforts to address inequities and reduce disparities for vulnerable populations and underserved communities



### Healthy and Welcomed Births

Increased access to high-quality and evidence-based **sexual and reproductive health services**

Expanded and improved access to **prenatal, inter-partum, and post-partum health services** with a focus on meeting the needs of under-served communities and addressing inequities

Increased support **services that address the mental, emotional, and physical health** of infants, parents, and caregivers

### Safe, Secure, and Nurturing Families

Increased access to **family-strengthening programs** that focus on parenting, child development, attachment and early literacy

Expansion of programs and policies focused on **child abuse and neglect and intimate partner violence prevention/intervention**

Improved supports for addressing **economic, food, and housing insecurity in families** with young children

### On-track Health and Development

Support for children's healthy social-emotional development through **early childhood behavioral health** services and systems development

Improved systems for screening and referral and increased access to **early intervention services** for children at risk for developmental delays

Increased promotion of and support services for **early childhood health, wellness, nutrition, and obesity-prevention**

### Accessible and Quality Early Care and Learning

Expanded and stable supply of **quality early care and learning** programs that includes and values a diversity of settings

Increased **child care financial assistance** and expansion of publicly-funded early care and learning programs

Increased compensation and professional development supports for the **early care and learning workforce**

## Concept of the Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) Policy Framework

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All of Hawai'i's children deserve the opportunity to develop to their full capacity. Yet today many obstacles stand in the way of early childhood development. These include uneven birth outcomes, unsafe homes and neighborhoods, and families struggling to make ends meet. The result is that many of our youngest keiki are already behind when they reach school.

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is designed to address those issues. ECAS is a statewide network of diverse governmental and non-governmental practitioners and professionals working together to develop a comprehensive system that supports early childhood development.

ECAS is organized into six cross-disciplinary teams, which work collaboratively to determine and implement systems-level strategies to ensure:

- More babies are born healthy
- More children develop on-track
- More children enter kindergarten school-ready
- More children are proficient learners by third grade

ECAS engages in policy and advocacy efforts to help support the goals developed across its teams and network. Policy makers on all levels are beginning to understand the importance of investing in our youngest keiki. ECAS advocacy efforts use the collective knowledge and expertise across all sectors of Hawai'i's early childhood system as the guiding compass to elevate our keiki and 'ohana.

A key tenet in ECAS' policy and advocacy work is that the following elements should be embedded into every aspect of early childhood systems design and service delivery:

- A comprehensive whole-child/whole-family, multi-generational approach;
- Culturally-responsive and inclusive practices; and
- Efforts to address inequities and reduce disparities for vulnerable populations and underserved communities.



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