

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) Team Action Highlights Fall 2023

We thank the many actors working to support early childhood development who share their mana`o through the ECAS network.



Taking Action for Hawai‘i’s Youngest Keiki

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is organized into cross-disciplinary teams collaborating to improve the system of care for Hawai‘i’s youngest keiki.

<https://hawaiiactionstrategy.org/ecas-teams>

2023 Priorities of ECAS Content Teams

Healthy & Welcomed Births

1



Hawai'i Maternal and Infant Health Collaborative (HMIHC)

HMIHC is working to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, while advancing health equity and reproductive justice.

- * Improve systems of care and support for perinatal people with substance use disorder and their infants
- * Increase access to contraception and promote reproductive life planning
- * Promote and support breastfeeding
- * Improve quality of care and community resources and supports for perinatal people

Safe & Nurturing Families

2



Team 2 is working to support safe and nurturing families and improve the community-wide response to family violence.

- * Implement and promote the **Aloha at Home** framework through a messaging campaign and partnerships with a network of service providers
- * Expand implementation of family-strengthening toolkits
- * Develop family-strengthening competencies and training for EC practitioners and service providers
- * Create a parenting support system that connects families to support programs and services

On-track Health & Development

3



Team 3 is working to ensure all children are supported to reach their optimal development by working with early childhood and healthcare providers and families.

- * Support child development screening and referral efforts
- * Promote family engagement in child development
- * Promote the social and emotional health of infants and toddlers
- * Embed physical activity and nutrition best practices into the early childhood system

Equitable Access To Programs & Services

4



Team 4 is working to increase access to early childhood programs and services throughout the state and to resolve program and service gaps.

- * Build capacity in child care and early learning and increase access to ECE services for infants and toddlers and children in unstable housing
- * Increase opportunities for family engagement and access to family support services
- * Create a comprehensive, virtual early childhood resource and referral service
- * Strengthen and integrate county and island-level early childhood systems and networks

Shared Vision for Hawai'i



- * Keiki are healthy.
- * Keiki are safe.
- * Keiki develop on track.
- * Keiki are ready for kindergarten.

High Quality Early Learning Programs



5

Team 5 is working to improve the quality of early childhood programs across all settings.

- * Develop and implement a comprehensive personnel development (**CSPD**) system to strengthen and sustain an Early Childhood workforce that provides meaningful outcomes for children (0-5) with special needs

Successful Early Childhood Transitions



6

Team 6 is working with families and communities to strengthen and streamline transitions through early childhood into school.

- * Target strong early language and literacy development efforts to communities of greatest need, leading to the development of a pipeline for early reading, kindergarten readiness and early academic achievement



IMPROVE ALIGNMENT



23

Mothers with newborns served by Perinatal Substance Use Peer Support; **EPIC `Ohana** program expanded to include four **Makua Allies** on O`ahu and Hawai`i Island

SHIFT AWARENESS,
NARRATIVE AND CULTURE



2

Breastfeeding-related assessments completed



STRENGTHEN CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP

To prototype an equity-driven package of lactation benefits
Team includes community members, insurance, and lactation providers

Perinatal Substance Use Disorder

- ✓ Developing a web-based interdisciplinary training system for Hawai`i
 - Writing and recording of initial modules with perspectives of lived experience, social work, and medicine
 - To be available by the end of 2023

Breastfeeding-related Assessments

- ✓ Completed statewide needs assessment of community organizations' breastfeeding policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) interventions
- ✓ Completed hospital assessment of Hawai`i's 12 maternity care hospitals' practices supportive of breastfeeding
- ✓ Assessment findings will inform next steps

Maternal Health and Maternal Morbidity/Mortality

- ✓ Holding space for alignment of various grant-funded initiatives coming into Hawai`i
 - Maternal Health Mini-Summit (September 23) and follow-up meeting had rich discussion with partners

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

- ✓ Facilitating discussion of insurance confidentiality and minor consent for sexual and reproductive health services
 - Gathering stakeholder feedback on proposed legislation and holding space for strategic discussions

Team 1 Conveners:
Bliss Kaneshiro, John A. Burns School of Medicine
Chevelle Davis, Papa Ola Lōkahi
Krista Olson, LATCH (Lactation Access Transforming Communities in Hawai`i)

The ECAS network and partners are working to prevent family violence and provide support for families to improve the quality of interactions that shape family wellbeing.



Safe & Nurturing
Families

SUPPORT PILOTS TO SCALE
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY



9

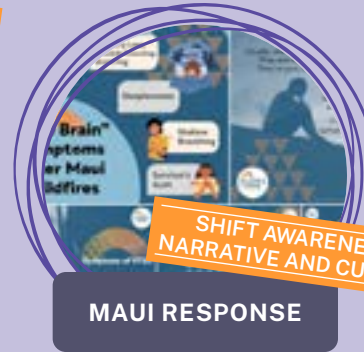
Community
events

SHIFT AWARENESS,
NARRATIVE AND CULTURE



427

'Ohana toolkits
distributed



SHIFT AWARENESS,
NARRATIVE AND CULTURE

MAUI RESPONSE

Created supplemental
social media content in
response to Maui fires



SEPTEMBER 2023

Presented findings
at the Hawai'i Pacific
Evaluators Conference

Aloha at Home / Nurture Daily Framework

✓ Continued to refine content and framework

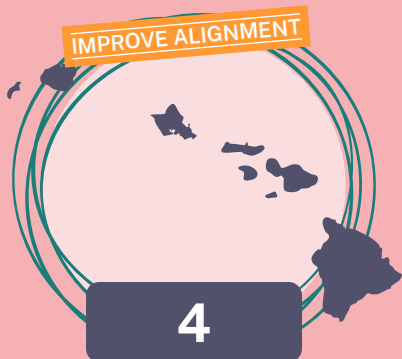
Outreach and Distribution

- ✓ With Honolulu GIA funds, distributed 'Ohana toolkits via partner organizations and participated in community events
- ✓ Developed extensive social media content
- ✓ Made all Aloha at Home Toolkit resources available on webpage for service providers to use with the families, including Aloha Values and Serve & Return guides

Team 2 Conveners:
Kanoe Enos, 'A'ali'i Alliance
Shelly Tokunaga-May, 'A'ali'i Alliance

Related Links:
Alohaathome.org

The ECAS network and partners are working to ensure all children are supported to reach their optimal development.



Counties collaborating with Healthy Kids Healthy Futures initiatives



ECE programs reached (Virtual and in person)



Children ages 0-5 in ECE settings impacted



Federal dollars infused into local economy for physical activity and nutrition in ECE

Healthy Keiki Healthy Future

- ✓ Closed out 18-months long statewide initiative
- ✓ Established and strengthened partnerships amongst ECE stakeholders to help our youngest keiki build lifelong healthy habits
- ✓ Implemented 8 key Early Childhood projects to increase food access for vulnerable populations and promote active play
- ✓ Documented efforts in a summary presentation
- ✓ Created **webpage** to share all resources created and inspire continued collaboration

Team 3 Conveners:
Keiko Nitta, Department of Health
Cherilyn Shiinoki, Family Hui Hawaii
Jordan Smith, Hawaii Appleseed

The ECAS network and partners are working to increase access to existing early childhood programs and services and to address program and service gaps.



INCREASE INVESTMENT

\$40K

Funding secured for Shared Resources through the Early Childhood Funders' Hui

REACH THE HARDEST TO REACH FAMILIES



EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (EHCY)

EHCY staff providing intensive on-the-ground support services to displaced families and children on Maui



EFFECT POLICY

EC COUNTY COORDINATORS

Meeting regularly as a community of practice to align efforts and strengthen outcomes

Strengthen Supports for Local Child Care Industry

- ✓ Supporting DHS-Child Care Program Office (CCPO) efforts to improve child care subsidy services via:
 - Consideration of cost-estimation strategies as a means to strengthen subsidy reimbursement rates
 - Administrative rule-change efforts for POD involving rate increases for providers, increased family income eligibility, and reduced co-payment burden for families
- ✓ Secured funding for Shared Resources, an extension of the Shared Services model
 - To provide expanded resources and benefit options
 - PATCH is continuing to build out FCC admin supports
- ✓ Addressing Infant/Toddler (I/T) teacher shortages
 - Supporting DHS efforts to convene a workgroup to develop strategies

County-level Early Childhood Community Profiles

- ✓ Two community profiles completed and in circulation
- ✓ **EC community profiles available online:**
 - Maui County
 - Hawaii County
- ✓ HNL and Kauai profiles in production
- ✓ Updated data tables for all 4 counties anticipated by January 2024

Team 4 Conveners:
Kaina Bonacorsi, Maui County
Angela Thomas, Hawaii County
Chris Jackson, Advisor and consultant

The ECAS network and partners are working to strengthen and sustain an Early Childhood (EC) workforce that provides meaningful outcomes for children with significant support needs and their families.




STRENGTHEN CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP

NEW HIRE

Hired Jonathan Alexander as CSPD Coordinator
jonathan@ecashawaii.org



IMPROVE ALIGNMENT

STANDARDS

Windward Community College piloted the integration of EI-ECSE Standards into its early childhood education curriculum

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) workgroups

- ✓ Increased involvement of ECE representatives on CSPD workgroups
 - New EOEL, P-20, IHE and DOE representatives

Establish Shared Understanding

- ✓ Completed a landscape scan
 - Establishing definitions for certification, licensure & endorsement
 - Identified commonalities and gaps between current state and EI-ECSE standards across disciplines
 - Identified Hawai'i preservice preparation programs
 - Hosted a stakeholder meeting with a focus on understanding and integrating the EI-ECSE standards into respective agencies

Evaluation

- ✓ Developing evaluation plan

Team 5 Conveners:
Stacy Kong, Hawaii Department of Health
Ted Burke, Advisor and consultant

Related Links:
www.hawaiiicspd.org

The ECAS network and partners are working with families and communities to strengthen transitions through early childhood and into school.



Successful Early
Childhood Transitions

SHIFT AWARENESS,
NARRATIVE AND CULTURE



4,000+

Books distributed on Hawai'i Island by pediatricians at well child check-ups through the Hawaii County **Read Out and Read (ROAR)**



43

Classrooms in 13 schools reached by **Always Dream** in the SY 2023

STRENGTHEN CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP



100%

Read to Me International staff are now **LENA START** certified



300+

Books & early learning supplies provided to Maui by **Always Dream** and other partners

Early Language and Literacy Programs

- ✓ Expansion of summer and school year programming offered across Hawaii
- ✓ **LENA** implementation continues statewide through a growing set of partners

IMPROVE ALIGNMENT

The Maui Early Childhood Resource Center

- ✓ Working toward a major expansion in early childhood family reading support efforts that will include **Imagination Library**, **ROAR** and an expanded Early Childhood lending library

SUPPORT PILOTS TO SCALE
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

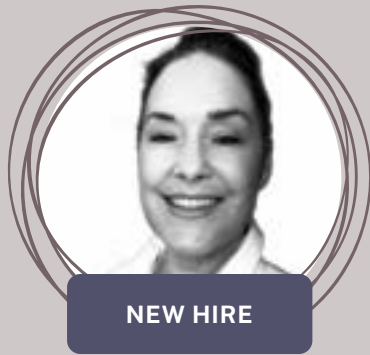
Kindergarten Readiness Continuums

- ✓ Partners are completing the first full year of the design and implementation effort in two communities
 - Waimānalo Early Learning 'upena
 - Pāhoa Promise partnerships
- ✓ Foundational work established in both communities
 - Core steering committees set of communities of practice
 - Finalizing community-specific measures of child wellbeing and opportunities for improvement

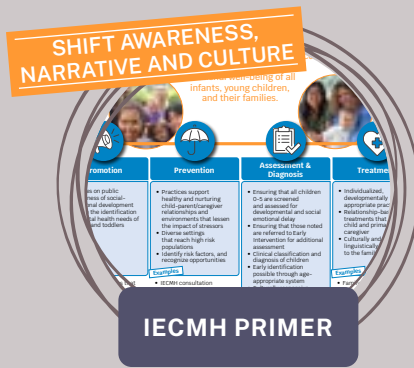
Team 6 Conveners:
Kara Kusunoki, Catapult Learning
Doug Imig, ECAS

The ECAS network and partners are working to integrate child and family mental health and trauma-informed care into our health and early care and learning systems.

Align & support long term planning efforts



Hired Christina Simmons as IECBH Coordinator
christina@ecashawaii.org



Available online



Professionals participated in **Promising Minds Fellows** training in infant and early childhood mental health



The Hawai'i Department of Health has been awarded a five year \$4M federal grant

IECBH Plan Implementation

- ✓ Tracking tool developed to identify, define and track status of milestones and artifacts in association with the IECBH Plan

Development of Promotional Materials

- ✓ Collaboration between Medicaid, and other state and private leadership, to identify and author key content
- ✓ Completed Primer about IECMH as a handout and flipbook

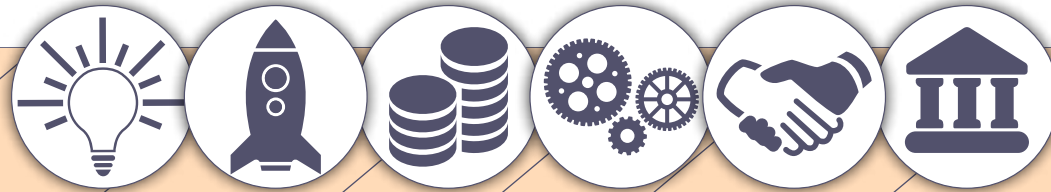
National Convening, Sep 2023

- ✓ Partners participated in the *Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Financing Policy Project Convening 2023 - Exploring State Strategies to Finance a Robust Continuum of IECMH Services* in Minneapolis

Project LAUNCH

(Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health)

- ✓ The Hawai'i Department of Health has been awarded a federal **SAMHSA.gov** grant aiming to promote resilience and emotional health for children, youth, and their families
 - Five years, \$4M federal grant
 - **Project LAUNCH** awards will provide local communities or tribes resources to disseminate effective and innovative early childhood mental health practices and services.



Shift Awareness,
Narrative and Culture

Support and Scale
Innovative Practices

Increase Investments

Improve Alignment

Strengthen Cross-
sector Leadership

Effect Policy

06/2023 - www.hawaiiactionstrategy.org

Early Childhood Action Strategy works to influence the core conditions that enable or impede Systems Change.

ECAS efforts and related outcomes are the result of ongoing partnerships between government and non-government actors who participate in the ECAS network.

Read our [ECAS Report 2023-Q3](#) to learn more about recent key outcomes using conditions of System Change methodology.



earlychildhood 
ACTION STRATEGY
TAKING ACTION FOR HAWAII'S CHILDREN

