

Who is in the Early Childhood Ecosystem?

While all Kansans share in the opportunity to ensure our youngest citizens thrive, many of us work in programs and services that interact in the early childhood ecosystem to promote healthy development, early learning, and strong families. Examples of ecosystem components—programs, job roles, funding sources—are shown on the following page.

As in any ecosystem, components of the Kansas Early Childhood Ecosystem interact in complex and symbiotic ways to deliver impact. The Blueprint describes how these interactions result in positive early childhood experiences. We have revised the language used to describe the former “mixed-delivery system” as a healthy, sustainable ecosystem rooted in thriving communities.

Thriving communities are critical to ecosystem functioning

When there is community-level buy-in from both public and private leaders to help strengthen families, invest in early learning, and support healthy development, our youngest Kansans and their families benefit. We are fortunate to have examples of thriving communities in all corners of our state. In these places, families experience a connected early childhood system where they can seamlessly navigate the full range of services needed to thrive. The Kansas Early Childhood Ecosystem visual below reflects the foundational role of thriving communities to healthy, efficient ecosystem functioning.



The Kansas Early Childhood Ecosystem components below represent the scale and diversity of programs, job roles, and funding sources routinely interacting in thriving communities; it is not intended to be an exhaustive list. However, these are all critical investment areas and serve as calls to action. Because ecosystems are interdependent, gaps in service have ripple effects that need to be addressed holistically. The goals and actions of this strategic plan guide us toward solutions that strengthen services across the ecosystem and focus on those that have the greatest impact on the lives of young children and their families.

Child Care



- Family Child Care
- Child Care Centers
- Head Start
- Child Care Assistance
- Out-of-School Programming

Health Care



- Family/Primary Care Doctors
- Pediatricians, OBGYNs, and Midwives
- Immunizations and Newborn Screening
- Food and Nutrition Resources
- Federally Qualified Health Centers

Pre-K to 12 Education



- Preschool Education
- Early Childhood Special Education (Part B)
- Kindergarten Transitions
- Literacy and Reading Supports
- School Health

Family Supports



- Economic Assistance (TANF, etc.)
- Housing Supports
- Child and Family Well-Being
- Dept. of Corrections Programs for Parents
- Employment Services

Crisis Services



- Care Coordination
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
- Family Preservation Services
- Substance Use Disorder Supports

Home Visiting



- Parent Education
- Universal Home Visiting (MCH)
- Parents as Teachers
- Healthy Families Initiatives
- Early Head Start
- MIECHV and Family First
- 1-800-CHILDREN

Prenatal and Maternal Support



- SIDS Network
- Kansas Perinatal Community Collaboratives
- Doula Services
- WIC Programs
- SUD Support for Pregnant Women

Early Intervention/ Developmental Disability



- ASQ Screening
- Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services (Part C)
- Infant/Toddler Specialist Network
- Kansas Inservice Training
- Special Health Care Supports
- Child Occupational and Physical Therapists

Mental/Behavioral Health



- Maternal Depression Screening
- Child Mental Health Specialists
- Mental Health Providers/Practices
- Local Health Departments
- Behavioral Health Specialists

Blueprint Building Blocks

The icons remind us that each sector is critical to meeting the vision guided by the Blueprint and detailed in our *All In For Kansas Kids Strategic Plan* vision.



**Healthy
Development**



**Strong
Families**



**Early
Learning**

