

A Shared Services Alliance for Pre-K

Published: Thursday, 09 June 2016 10:00

Written by: Sara Gunderson



Voices for Utah Children is excited to be involved in several innovative new developments in early childhood education here in Utah. In April, Voices received a second 3-year grant from the Kellogg foundation, which will enable us to continue enhancing and supporting high quality Pre-K through our partnership with Granite School District (GSD) Preschool Services.

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Hoa Mai

Vietnamese English Bilingual Preschool Seattle, WA For Voices, a key piece of this new grant is the piloting of a Shared Services Alliance (SSA) — essentially a network of preschool providers who join together as a kind of cooperative, allowing them to share administrative costs and increase buying power. For successful SSAs, reinvestment of the cost savings translates into higher staff retention, improved program quality, and better overall outcomes for the children they serve.

Last month, I had the opportunity to tour Sound Child Care Solutions (SCCS), a highly successful shared services model in Seattle, WA. SCCS is a consortium of Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers offering high quality preschool opportunities for children ages 0-5; the alliance includes nine centers across Greater Seattle, with a centralized administrative facility. Some of the centers serve mostly low-income families, while others serve a largely upper-income population. Each center has preserved its own unique culture. Because of the SCCS partnership, however, high program quality is able to be maintained across all nine centers.

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Refugee & Immigrant Family Center Seattle, WAVoices and GSD worked with several private preschool providers across the Salt Lake Valley during the first Kellogg grant project, and a number of these providers have expressed interest in sharing services with one another. Because they already share a deep commitment to providing high quality early education opportunities to the children and families they serve, I am excited and optimistic about the prospect of launching an ECE Shared Services Alliance to better serve more children across the city, the county, and ultimately the state.

For 30 years now, Voices for Utah Children has called on our state, federal and local leaders to put children's needs first. But the work is not done. The children of 30 years ago now have children of their own. Too many of these children are growing up in poverty, without access to healthcare or quality educational opportunities.

How can you be involved?

[Make a tax-deductible donation](#) to Voices for Utah Children—or [join our Network](#) with a monthly donation of \$20 or more. Network membership includes complimentary admission to Network events with food, socializing, and opportunity to meet child

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advocacy experts. And don't forget to [join our listserv](#) to stay informed!

We look forward to the future of Voices for Utah Children and we hope you will be a part of our next 30 years.

Special thanks to American Express for sponsoring our 30th Anniversary Year.

