

Winter Newsletter



Once again, I can hardly believe another year has flown by so quickly. It has been a busy year for early learning in our region and in our state. At the state level, they are continuing to expand [ECEAP](#) (state funded preschool). We are on track to serve all eligible children in the next few years. The formation of the new [Department of Children Youth and Families](#) (DCYF) will increase how the state serves at-risk children and youth with the goal of producing better outcomes in all Washington communities.

We've accomplished a lot in 2017 by expanding and deepening our partnerships in all six counties, launched a pilot project offering 123 Grow & Learn in partnership with ESD 112 and the Kelso school district, for Spanish speaking families; policy leaders joined us on an early learning tour; and our community held a regional early learning summit.

In February, we released the 2017 State of Our Children & Families [report](#). This report significantly increased the conversation about early childhood education. In Southwest Washington, 42% of entering young students demonstrate proficient characteristics in all 6 domains: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math. That means that more than 60% of students aren't ready. We can and we must do better! The data report only tells part of the story. We are collecting stories, stories of children and their families, about the opportunities and challenges of raising young children in our communities.

I'm so excited about 2018. We have so much planned for the year including the launch of Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors), a parent education program for Hispanic families. We also will release our second State of the Children & Families report in April, hold a public awareness/engagement event in March (see below), expand our early learning tours and share the stories of children and families. It will be a full and exciting year.

We are doing this work with you. Thank you for engaging in and supporting the work of early learning. You make it possible to increase the number of children ready on the first day of school.

Warm regards,
Debbie Ham | Executive Director

TABLES & CHAIRS & FIRST FRIDAY

FRIDAY, MARCH 2 FIRST FRIDAY
Boomerang
808 Main Street
Vancouver WA 98660

SELF/SWEL has worked with area artists to create 10 sets of one-of-a-kind small tables and chairs beautifully decorated to represent all the early learners in Southwest Washington. These tables will be displayed in area businesses and organizations leading up to the art event held on First Friday at Boomerang. At the end of the evening, the art pieces will be auctioned off. Bid on your favorites and you will be taking one of these sets home! **Mark your calendar for March 2.**

FUN With EARLY LEARNERS

Time is precious, and we seem to have less of it during the holidays. Learning is everywhere for birth to 5 year olds and spending time reading, creating holiday traditions together or exploring our communities are great activities. Check out this amazing Pinterest board that is geared toward all things early learning. It is filled with inspiration. [Find our more...](#)

Tis the season...

Generosity is all around. Investing in early learning is a great way to build community and have long-term affects for generations. Young families sometimes need a little guidance and help moving their early learners through the wonder years. This support will have an impact now and into the future. Because of you, we are supporting a wide ranging system that works with families and children to smooth the way for kindergarten. Join us in this work to make sure that all 6,000 students entering school are ready to learn on the first day of kindergarten. selfwa.org

Happy Holidays!