



Grown in Durham

DURHAM'S EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION PLAN (ECAP)

WHAT IS AN EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION PLAN?

In 2019, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services released North Carolina's Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP). The NC ECAP puts forth goals that, if achieved, would "provide all North Carolina's Children, birth through age 8, with a fair opportunity to grow up healthy in safe and nurturing families, schools and communities, so that they are learning and ready to succeed."

In Durham, we also want all of our young children and their families to thrive. Durham is the first county in the state to create an ECAP for our community.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The Durham Children's Initiative (DCI), with the support of Durham County, brought together families, community members, and more than 50 family-/child-serving agencies to imagine a better early childhood system that doesn't leave any children or families behind.

Over 1,000 parents, guardians and other caregivers of Durham's young children shared their ideas and leadership and helped create the plan. Our plan covers many different parts of our early childhood systems—health care, child care, elementary school, family supports, and more.

WHAT'S IN THE PLAN?

Parents, community leaders, and early childhood service providers teamed up to come up with the 21 recommendations below. The full Durham ECAP includes proposed strategies and action plans to bring each recommendation to life.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

- Address institutional racism as a root cause and share power with parents and communities
- Ensure early childhood professionals across sectors are respected, well-compensated, highly trained and reflect the communities they serve
- Increase resource awareness and create an easily navigable service system for families with young children
- Facilitate data sharing between agencies and with communities to better understand areas of greatest need, track progress, and promote transparency and accountability
- Ensure early childhood services are accessible and welcoming to families regardless of immigration status or English language proficiency
- Expand opportunities for accessible, inclusive, safe and family-friendly enrichment activities and public spaces
- Advocate for workplaces that understand and support the needs of families with young children

BASIC NEEDS

- Ensure families with young children have economic security and opportunities for wealth-building and long-term economic prosperity
- Promote access to safe, stable, affordable, and healthy housing for families with young children
- Ensure families with young children have access to enough affordable, culturally-relevant, healthy food every day
- Ensure families have the essential family supplies needed to support pre- and post-partum health and to care for babies and young children
- Provide reliable and free or low-cost transportation to early childhood services

HEALTHY

- Create and implement standards for culturally-affirming, anti-racist maternal and child healthcare
- Ensure families have access to convenient, affordable, preventive and responsive maternal and child healthcare

SAFE AND NURTURED

- Ensure early learning environments, birth through 3rd grade, are trauma-informed, culturally-affirming, gender-affirming, and focused on social-emotional health
- Promote preventive and responsive approaches to foster social-emotional, mental health and resilience of young children and their families
- Reimagine Social Services and Child Protective Services to become more trauma-informed, anti-racist, and focused on prevention

LEARNING AND READY TO SUCCEED

- Invest in a sustainable child care system to provide developmentally-appropriate early learning experiences that are affordable and accessible to all
- Develop a coordinated transition between early childhood education and K-12 education
- Ensure children with developmental delays or disabilities learn in environments where they can thrive and their families have the support they need to advocate and care for their children
- Promote and support early literacy for young children starting at birth in partnership with families and caregivers

The full plan will be released in September 2021! Stay tuned for updates soon.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Next up, community members, parents, early childhood providers and early childhood systems leaders in Durham will come together in a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will make key decisions to guide the plan implementation. To learn more, or to nominate someone, scan the QR code or call Bonnie Delaune at (919) 748-7411.



Learn more at the Durham ECAP website: <https://dci-nc.org/early-childhood-action-plan/>



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