

**TITLE:** Defining the Role of the Health System in Promoting Kindergarten Readiness: Driving the Development of an Oregon Early Learning Strategic Plan with Parent Voice

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**STUDENT SUBMISSION:** No

**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** Early Childhood Education, Kindergarten Readiness, Health Systems, Quality Measurement, Social Determinants of Health

**ABSTRACT:** To understand how families see the health system's role in promoting kindergarten readiness and to integrate parent perspectives into the development of an the Early Learning Strategic Plan, the research team from the Center for Improvement of Child & Family Services at Portland State University, in partnership with Children's Institute, facilitated 8 focus groups with parents/caregivers across Oregon in early 2018.

The project purposely sought participation of families who represent cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity, as well as families with children with special health needs. Focus groups included 87 parents/caregivers from Baker, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Multnomah, and Willowa counties.

Presenters will share the health supports families currently access, describe how those supports promote kindergarten readiness, and highlight the gaps and opportunities where the health system can better promote kindergarten readiness. We will also discuss how the findings have informed the development of a health system quality measure of the health sector's role in kindergarten readiness.

This project serves as an example of how family/community voice can inform health system quality measurement and ultimately impact health system change, investments, and cross-sector collaboration to improve kindergarten readiness.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Identify gaps and opportunities where the health system can better promote kindergarten readiness and describe a current effort in Oregon to ground the development of an Early Learning Strategic Plan, including health system quality measurement and accountability, in family voice.

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