



## **Grant Proposal for Two Fiscal Years**

**July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010  
and  
July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011**

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## Acknowledgements

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## I. Overview

Ready by Five, formerly known as the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative, is a partnership project for early learning in Yakima, Washington. This project was initially developed in 2007 and implemented in 2008 by a partnership of 42 Yakima community stakeholders and principal funders, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Thrive by Five Washington (Thrive) and the Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL). The project's work focuses on five census tracts of Yakima tracts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 15 (known for the purposes of this project as East Yakima) to get children in our program, aged from birth to five years and their families, ready for the children's successful entry into kindergarten. Ready by Five is one of two Gates Foundation/Thrive by Five early learning demonstration communities in Washington State (see Appendix E for a project area map).

Please note that Ready by Five is both the name for the demonstration early learning program in Yakima that is funded by the Gates Foundation and Thrive, and the name of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation managed by a community-representative Board of Directors. This nonprofit entity's Board oversees the planning and provision of services for the early learning program in the demonstration community of East Yakima. At this time, Educational Service District (ESD) 105 serves as the fiscal intermediary for funds received from the Gates Foundation and Thrive that are used by the nonprofit corporation in coordination and delivery of the early learning demonstration program.

This current proposal presents a plan for delivery of services by Ready by Five for the two year period from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2011. The proposal furthers the project purposes, which are that by creating high-quality early learning experiences for East Yakima children and their families, Ready by Five expects to measurably increase the school readiness and school success rate of the East Yakima children who enter the Yakima School District.

Ready by Five functions and provides services through partnerships with its funders and community providers. The partners have agreed on the following broadly stated goals:

- The community will understand the value of early learning, including what resources are needed to develop the kindergarten ready child, referred to in this proposal as the Ready Child, and will take responsibility for advancing early learning opportunities for children.
- Children enrolled in programs of Ready by Five will be helped to get ready for kindergarten.
- Families will be supported and empowered to be their children's first teachers.
- Professional development opportunities (training, mentoring and resources) will be available to early learning providers.
- Ready by Five will become a model of in-depth, coordinated, culturally relevant early learning services that others can replicate.

These goals are more narrowly defined and made operational by Ready by Five through selected programs for enrolled children and their families in three principal areas, designated by the

funders as Tier I activities: Home-Based Early-Learning services (HBEL), child care Quality Improvement services and a Kindergarten Transition Program. Tier II activities include Parent and Community Outreach and Engagement through Parent Groups, the Promotores Program, and Creative Families Play & Learn. In this proposal period, separately funded activities encompassing planning and fundraising for the center's building capital and operations will also be implemented for Educare of East Yakima, an early learning center.

Further definition of the program's goals is discussed in this proposal together with delineation of strategies and proposed component activities within programmatic areas for accomplishment of the goals. These strategies and activities are outlined in Ready by Five's Logic Model shown in Appendix A. The logic model includes outcomes to be achieved in four areas, as requested by our principal funders: (1) direct benefit outcomes that will impact the children, parents and providers; (2) generative benefit outcomes that will impact the broader early learning community in Yakima; (3) learning benefit outcomes that will provide resources and information to funders and help advance the early learning field; and (4) long-term outcomes that will secure a successful school readiness path for at-risk children in East Yakima.

This proposal builds on Ready by Five's Logic Model. Section V provides an overview of the goals and major outcomes of the activities proposed for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Section VI discusses the key aspects of the Activity and Milestone Charts (see Appendix B for the complete set of charts) including activities to be performed, and milestones and indicators to be met to document performance and provide appropriate accountability toward achieving the planned outcomes.

Ready by Five's current proposal also provides a discussion of the alignment between our project goals and those of our funders (Section II), a picture of our progress after one year of service provision and the community needs that continue to exist (Section III), the governance structures within the project (Section IV), organizational capacity (Section VII), the challenges and risks that could affect results and how Ready by Five will respond (Section VIII) and the lessons learned (Section IX). The final section (Section X) contains a discussion of the proposed budget in the context of the proposed programs, additional budget resources and proposed budget management.

Ready by Five appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington, our principal funders. We look forward to continuing this vital work to improve early learning opportunities for children and families in East Yakima that will promote school readiness and increase school and life success.

## II. Strategy Alignment

Ready by Five is a partnership for early learning in Yakima, Washington, that is working to create opportunities for all children in the East Yakima community to have high-quality early learning experiences. Through this effort, Ready by Five expects to measurably increase the school readiness and school success rate of East Yakima children who enter the Yakima School District.

### How Ready by Five is furthering the funders' Early Learning strategies

Ready by Five, and the East Yakima families and children the project serves, help further the early learning objectives of our principal funders, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington, by serving as one of their two demonstration communities for early learning strategies that address the school readiness needs of high risk populations. In the two fiscal years of the proposal period, Ready by Five plans to offer its target population high-quality early learning experiences described below and ranked as Tier I and Tier II programs, in alignment and accordance with funders' strategies.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has stated in their *2005 Investing in Children* document their theory of action as follows:

“If our foundation makes a focused, 10-year investment in early learning in Washington State, we can help create the public and political will to develop a sustainable system of affordable, high-quality early learning across the state. Ultimately, our actions and those of our partners will lead to higher levels of school-readiness, greater success in school, fewer negative adolescent behaviors, and a greater likelihood of successful young adulthood (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2005, p. 12).”

This Gates Foundation document also states that their early learning strategy's intended impact is to:

- “Significantly increase the school-readiness rate among all children entering kindergarten in the two demonstration communities.”
- “Statewide, reduce the gap between low-income and high-income children's rate of school readiness.” (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2005, p. 16)

They have further identified programmatic strategies through which to achieve this impact as:

- **“Parent support and education.** Through a variety of programs inside and outside of the home, parents and caregivers will receive information, training, and support to be their children's first and most important teachers.”
- **“Comprehensive early learning centers that serve the whole community.** Our funding approach is to create a coordinated network of quality early learning in the demonstration communities, building new resources and strengthening existing efforts. This will include

tailoring services to meet the unique needs of each family. Central to this approach is building one model childcare center, or ‘hub’ per community, that serves the entire community.”

- **“Licensed childcare.** Using a variety of approaches, we will transform existing licensed childcare in the two demonstration communities from today’s low and moderate quality to high-quality, affordable early learning environments. These communities, which will include new high-quality ‘hub’ centers, will demonstrate quality and act as a catalyst in transforming the more than 2,100 existing centers and nearly 6,200 existing home-based centers statewide.” (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2005, p.12)

Ready by Five is proposing activities in all these areas for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Ready by Five’s strategies, taken together, are designed to measurably increase the school readiness and school success rate of the children in East Yakima, an area where many children live in poverty. Ready by Five’s plans for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 include activities to assist parents, through both home-visits and educational programs, and to assist licensed child care providers to increase the quality of care they provide. In addition, Ready by Five will be taking steps toward developing a comprehensive early learning center.

Ready by Five’s other principal funder, Thrive by Five Washington has identified seven main strategy areas for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, three of which Ready by Five will primarily focus on as Tier I programs, and three as Tier II, which will require less intensive resource utilization. Ready by Five will also be intensively planning for later implementation of the Educare strategy during this biennium.

Thrive by Five Washington’s Tier I strategies identified for Ready by Five are:

- **Home-Based Early Learning Programs.** Ready by Five will implement three Home-Based Early Learning programs in East Yakima in fiscal years 2010 and 2011. These are Nurse Family Partnership, Enhanced First Steps and Parents as Teachers.
- **Quality Rating and Improvement System.** Ready by Five will use several programs, including coaching, professional development and adult education, quality improvement grants, and a Lending Library of early learning materials, games and toys to begin implementing a quality improvement system for licensed and informal child care providers.
- **Kindergarten Transition Program.** Ready by Five’s Kindergarten Transition Program creates a two-week opportunity for entering kindergarteners and their families to interact with the kindergarten teacher in the new school environment, and to experience and familiarize themselves with school routines, prior to the start of school and without the complexity of older children present.

Tier II activities identified for Ready by Five for less intensive resource utilization are:

- **Parent Engagement and Support Program.** Ready by Five has two programs in this service area. Our Promotores Program enables community workers to meet individually with families, to discuss early learning and school readiness and their importance for school and life success. They can also assess other critical needs (e.g., food, shelter) that are impeding a family’s ability to strengthen their focus on getting their children ready

for school, and assist in mitigation of these needs through referrals to appropriate community agencies. Our facilitated Parent Support Groups engage and attract parents to share solutions and coping strategies, reduce the isolation experienced by many families in poverty, and promote parent empowerment. A particular emphasis is placed on helping parents understand their role as teachers of their children and as partners with their children's school teachers during their child's more formal educational experiences.

- ***Community Outreach and Engagement Program.*** Ready by Five is offering two low-cost programs that are available to the broader community of East Yakima parents and child care providers. Creative Families Play & Learn offers play and learn experiences twice monthly to interested families. These active, playful learning events serve multiple purposes as an introduction to Ready by Five, an early learning experience, a training opportunity for early learning students and a volunteer opportunity for community members from throughout greater Yakima. Ready by Five has recently been offered a “permanent” interim home at Adams Elementary School for these events. With this comes the possibility of a daytime Play & Learn site in the same space. See further comments below under the “Support for Informal Caregivers” discussion.
- ***Ready Yakima.*** This is the second Community Outreach and Engagement Program offered by Ready by Five but its significance merits a separate comment and this is consistent with its separate identity in our logic model. It is an effort to build on Washington State's early learning benchmarks and build consensus among kindergarten teachers, and licensed and informal care providers as to the characteristics of the Ready Child. We hope in this biennium to further involve parents and the greater Yakima community in understanding these characteristics and enlisting broader community support and sense of shared responsibility for developing Ready Children in Yakima.
- ***Support for Informal Caregivers.*** Ready by Five has submitted a separate plan to Thrive to provide quality improvement opportunities to Family, Friend and Neighbor providers, pending future funding availability. In the meantime, Ready by Five is in contact with informal care providers and includes them in invitations and outreach activities to encourage their participation in Creative Families Play & Learn activities and Parent Support Groups. Ready by Five envisions that after the licensed providers involved in the Quality Rating and Improvement System have established usage patterns with the Lending Library, we will open this opportunity also to the informal care providers in our target community. As noted above, we have very recently been given the potential opportunity to create a Play & Learn site prior to construction of Educare of East Yakima. We are pursuing other funding for furniture and equipment, which subsequently can be transferred to Educare. Since the furnishings for Creative Families Play & Learn will be compatible with what is needed for a Play & Learn facility, should funding become available to implement a Support for Informal Caregivers Program/Family, Friend and Neighbor Program, Ready by Five will be well positioned.
- ***Educare.*** During this biennium, planning for Educare will include a capital campaign, development of an operating budget and a governance agreement. All of these efforts are currently in progress and will be separately presented to our funders in the near future for discussion and review. Only the planning efforts for Educare's operations are included as funded activities in this proposal.

The programs above are in alignment with our funders' goal of improved school readiness and are consistent with their strategies to achieve that goal. Our funders' investments will create a variety of high-quality early learning environments that support parents as their children's first and most significant teachers, will help improve the quality of child care to more effectively prepare children for kindergarten and will promote school readiness in the children of our target community to promote success in school and life.

Our target population is also consistent with our funders' intent for their demonstration communities. We are serving:

- ***Children with multiple risk factors.*** As noted in the Project Description below, the children in East Yakima come from families affected by several factors known to impede children's school success: poverty, parents who have not graduated from high school, parents who are not fluent in English, single parent families, and parents with no full-time, year-round work.
- ***Ready by Five has strong, local capacity and demonstrative evidence of broad support.*** With its 42 Stakeholder founding organizations, its community-representative Board of Directors, and its provider partnerships that are designed to foster long-term sustainability, Ready by Five is well-positioned to effectively implement the funders' strategies. Our use of providers who are already experienced with our target population and the neighborhood and our emphasis on home-based programs and neighborhood centers allow us to reach children wherever they spend their days.
- ***Appropriate size.*** Ready by Five's target area of East Yakima has approximately 3,700 children, ages birth to five years.
- ***Demographic, political and geographic diversity.*** East Yakima's residents are principally of Hispanic, Anglo, African-American and Native American descent.

### How Ready by Five Fits within the Early Learning Field and the Region

The Tier I and Tier II programs that Ready by Five will deliver in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 are consistent with current research, practice and thinking in the early learning field. Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers are evidence-based programs and the remaining programs, even those in Tier II, are supported through the research literature. Ready by Five is providing some of these programs as pilot programs and we look forward to working with our funders to develop research models to test these efforts.

**Home-Based Early Learning Programs (HBEL).** Ready by Five's HBEL programs are strongly supported by the research literature, which shows that home-based early learning programs are effective in strengthening families and in producing positive infant and child development outcomes, and provide a strong base on which to develop school readiness in young children. One of the most effective ways to reach high-risk families with infants and children is to bring the services to them in their homes. The research stresses the importance of children's early years in developing cognitive and social-emotional skills, and the important role of parents in shaping children's lives. The research on home visiting programs suggests that children's development will be best promoted through child-focused interventions that also involve the

child's family, no matter how that family may be constituted (Gomby, Culross & Behrman, 1999).

In addition, prenatal and postpartum supportive care are each an effective intervention for reducing many known risks, and for promoting better birth outcomes, parenting competence, and healthy early development of young children. For example, maternal mental health is a key factor affecting parent-child attachment and bonding, and all early infancy experiences. Ready by Five's providers are knowledgeable and experienced with our high-risk population, and the prenatal and postpartum home visitors assess, educate, and refer early for depression and mood disorder care. Prenatal and postpartum home visiting is especially effective for low-income and immigrant families who may lack access to culturally appropriate health care services, or who may be very young and/or have little familial or neighborhood support to prepare for the birth and parenting of an infant. These conditions are widely found in our target area.

Ready by Five's HBEL services have been planned to offer a strong mix of service options that effectively support the development of young children, and support their parents and caregivers in their parenting roles. Various services are available that will engage and support enrolled families from pregnancy through age five. The three HBEL interventions that Ready by Five offers, all take a child-focused approach in the context of the child's family. Two of them provide prenatal and postpartum nursing care visits.

- ***Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)*** offers intensive home visits by specially trained nurses during a woman's first pregnancy (enrollees must be less than 28 weeks pregnant) until the infant's second birthday. NFP takes a child-focused approach in the context of the child's family by helping parents to understand and bond with their babies, and to develop family goals that focus on life behaviors that in turn encourage the parents to build plans and dreams. The *Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE)* curriculum is also used, which involves parents directly in teaching experiences with their infants. NFP was developed by David Olds, PhD, and has been evaluated through randomized, controlled trials in Elmira, New York (1977), Memphis, Tennessee (1988), and Denver, Colorado (1994). Outcomes for NFP are based on 30 years of ongoing, longitudinal, randomized trials. These outcomes include: improved prenatal health, fewer childhood injuries, fewer subsequent pregnancies, increased maternal employment, and improved school readiness of children. Scientifically controlled studies have found consistent and dramatic benefits for first-time, low-income mothers and their children. Program effects are sustained after the intervention ends. There have been multiple site replications in rural and urban areas, and among different ethnic populations.
- ***Enhanced First Steps (EFS)*** is a home visiting program for low-income, high-risk pregnant and parenting women and their families that continues until the child's second birthday. The East Yakima EFS services incorporate the relationship-based *Promoting First Relationships (PFR)* curriculum, as well as the PIPE and *Promoting Maternal Mental Health* curricula. PFR has been shown to support attachment and positive social and emotional growth of infants, both important factors for early brain development in infants and for their ability to benefit from early learning experiences.
- ***Parents As Teachers (PAT)*** is open to pregnant women and parents of children up to age five. Ready by Five, in accordance with its funders' strategies, places a priority on

serving children from birth to three years. PAT offers the child-centered *Born To Learn*<sup>TM</sup> curriculum and teaches parents to become good teachers for their children. PAT is a proven effective parent education, family support and school readiness program for families who have children younger than kindergarten age. PAT is designed to increase parent and caregiver knowledge of child development, improve parenting skills, detect developmental delays and health issues, prevent child abuse and neglect, and increase a child's school readiness and success. The Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect has identified PAT as a promising practice. PAT has been offered at 3,000 sites worldwide and 26 sites in Washington state. Among the results of 25 years of program evaluation research are findings that PAT children enter school with increased readiness to learn, and that PAT children from families living in poverty do as well in school as do children from non-poverty homes.

**Child Care Quality Improvement.** Early learning experts agree that high-quality early learning is vital for putting children on the trajectory for success in school and life. Many states, including North Carolina, Colorado and Oklahoma, are already implementing varying forms of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) to ensure that children in licensed child care settings have access to learning experiences and facilities that support their learning and growth. A review of the research on five state QRIS models, done by the Rand Corporation, identifies consistent components of quality across all models. These include ratings to measure quality, activities to increase staff training and education, and resources to improve learning environments (Rand, 2008). Effective QRIS models also serve families by providing parents, the consumers of child care services, with information on the quality of the available child care facilities, thereby enabling parents to make informed choices about child care placements.

In 2008 DEL, in partnership with Thrive by Five Washington and five field test sites, launched an initiative to plan and implement a QRIS field test in five communities. Although only five communities were selected, there were many more Washington communities that applied, indicating that many early learning communities around the state recognize the need for QRIS, as well as the value it would bring their families and children.

DEL announced the suspension of QRIS in December 2008 due to a severe state budget shortfall. Thrive by Five Washington remains committed to working with its two demonstration communities to continue with a modified QRIS plan and hope to learn from its program to improve quality. Ready by Five and our partners will implement Washington State's first QRIS field test. Although some training and specialized consultation are available to all enrolled licensed providers, the Seeds to Success Modified QRIS model will provide intensive, one-on-one reflective coaching in addition to support for selected East Yakima providers. This coaching aims to produce positive changes in providers' skills and abilities to support our community's children's in their readiness for school.

**School Readiness.** Ready by Five's focus on school readiness is consistent with trends in the early learning, social science and economic development fields. There has been a growing trend nationally and in Washington State to understand the crucial role of early learning experiences for children's school readiness and later school success (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Washington Learns, 2006, p. 19). Also important is the trend to link the early learning field to the K-12

system in a way that is meaningful, and provides increased outcomes in the area of school readiness and success for children as they transition to elementary school. Aligning curriculum, goals and objectives, and strategic efforts in the birth-to-five field to the school improvement work that has evolved over the last decade in the public school system makes sense. The Washington Learns panel concluded that early learning should be viewed as part of a child's basic education, and recommended a preschool to college (P-20) approach to education in Washington (Washington Learns, 2006, p. 38).

Emphasizing early literacy development and focused interventions have also been a trend in the early learning field. The content in Ready by Five's programs reflect this trend. The emphasis has come from recent research demonstrating that the way parents and caregivers speak to young children significantly affects IQ, literacy and academic success later in life (Hart and Risley, 1995). Guiding providers, parents and caregivers to implement strategies that will specifically develop a child's early literacy skills will predict later literacy achievement for preschool children (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008).

**Parent Engagement and Support.** Children with richer home literacy environments demonstrate higher levels of reading knowledge and skills at kindergarten entry (Nord, Lennon, Liu, & Chandler, 2000). Parent involvement outside the home, such as participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., concerts, sports, Scouts), helps children with reading, general knowledge, and mathematics knowledge and skills (Reaney, Denton, & West, 2002). Ready by Five's Promotores Program staff as part of our Parent Support Program, demonstrate and engage parents in early learning activities and discussions during home visits. Staff also infuse strategies and replicable activities into Creative Families Play & Learn and Parent Support Groups.

Promotores Program staff reach out to parents in the target area to educate them in ways to overcome barriers and change their routines to increase early learning knowledge, and to be intentional about early learning activities in the home. Ecocultural theory states that a universal task for all families is to organize a sustainable daily routine (Weisner, 1984). The theory assumes that family adaptation involves balancing ecology (resources and constraints), culture (beliefs, values and schemata), and the needs and abilities of family members in the organization of daily routines (Gallimore, Weisner, Kaufman, & Bernheimer, 1989).

Research is demonstrating that parents' participation and involvement in their children's education is essential to children's success in kindergarten and their future educational years. Research also supports a focus on disadvantaged parents, since disadvantaged parents require more interaction and support than do those from a more privileged setting.

**Geographic Region.** The Yakima community has come together through Ready by Five to support efforts to increase the kindergarten readiness of its children. During the planning phase for this project, a survey of parents in East Yakima found that 83 percent said they would like help in preparing their children for kindergarten, more than 60 percent wanted to attend parent learning sessions on child health and development or to be offered parenting tips, and more than 50 percent wanted to have home visits on early learning (East Yakima Early Learning Initiative, 2007, p. 13). In addition, community leaders and organizations serving families and children in

the Yakima area are aware of Ready by Five and have indicated a strong interest in the project's success. A total of 42 organizations signed on as founding community stakeholders.

Many of these stakeholder entities offer early learning services; all are working collaboratively with Ready by Five to strengthen and lengthen our reach. Several of their senior managers serve on the Ready by Five Board of Directors and are helping make our project the most comprehensive in scope.

### III. Project Description

#### Summary of Current Status of Ready by Five Project

Ready by Five began implementing funder-approved programs in 2008. During this start-up year, Ready by Five has provided all planned services at some level in our five-census-tract project area. Initial first-year performance targets were essentially met as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. 2008 Performance vs. Goal by Month**

Programs	Implementation Date	Goal for Year 1	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Cumulative yr 1
Promotores	7/31/2008	48 families	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	54
Parents as Teachers	5/13/2008	60 families	13	8	8	4	24	5	10	72
Nurse Family Partnership	4/1/2008	25 clients	8	1	2	2	1	3	3	20
Enhanced First Steps (EFS)	4/1/2008	100 clients	0	0	15	17	25	19	21	97
		YNHS:	0	0	0	13	13	5	8	39
		YVFWC:	0	0	9	2	10	12	12	45
		YVMH:	0	0	6	2	2	2	1	13
Parent Groups	8/1/2008	25 families	0	7	7	4	1	1	37	57
Creative Families	3/1/2008	100 families	19	9	23	6	31	10	6	104
Early Literacy Coaches	7/1/2008	contact all 50 licensed providers--42 homes & 8 centers	38	12	0	0	0	0	0	50
Quality Improvement System	3/1/2008	Create a professional development system								
CONEVyT	9/15/2008	40 providers 20 parents								0
I-BEST	9/15/2008	15 providers	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	19
Educare	9/1/2010	schematic design								
Creative Curriculum	9/1/2008	100 care givers and staff	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	17
Kinder Transition	6/9/2008	200 to 250 children	0	0	294	0	0	0	0	294

For reasons well-understood and accepted by both Ready by Five and our funders, the Quality Rating and Improvement System is delayed in its implementation, but substantial planning, staff training and provider engagement has occurred

nonetheless. To date, all delivered programs have been well-received, and the Enhanced First Steps and Parents as Teachers programs have waiting lists as we move into 2009. The global economic decline has had an impact on our principal and secondary funders, such as the State of Washington, and the hoped-for growth in the next two fiscal years will be smaller than originally planned. We remain optimistic that we can still meet some of our community demand and maintain a strong community presence through the less costly Community Outreach and Engagement, and Parent Engagement and Support Programs.

The recent completion of the Early Learning Network Agreement (ELNA) document (which defines the rules for sharing data between participants and with the program evaluators), and planned further development of the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) data base (which is the information system chosen by Thrive to capture data for the management and the evaluation of the program's services) should both bring new information that will be helpful in evaluation and in future program planning.

Our community's needs have not changed during the 2008 initial implementation year, and lack of school readiness of the entering kindergarten children in the Yakima School District remains of primary concern to all. The economic consequences of non-Ready Children is increasingly understood in the community at large, particularly when they become more familiar with the demographics of Yakima County, which has an unusually high proportion of young families. Yakima County ranks at 32 out of 507 U.S. metropolitan regions, with 17.4 percent of our region's housing being occupied by families with children under the age of six, and almost 17 percent of our population under 10 years old. The percentages in our East Yakima target area are even higher. In 15 years those children will be entering the prime workforce age group. Will they be work ready?

Currently, at 22.4 percent, Yakima County has the highest percentage of residents without a high school diploma among benchmark communities in Washington State. In a March 2008 study done for The Yakima County Development Association, our region's employers noted the challenge of finding sufficient workers with the appropriate skills. Yakima is well behind the national level in its high school graduation rate and in its overall educational attainment.

We know that low educational levels limit growth in wage levels and that high school dropouts earn nearly 40 percent less than high school graduates. They can cost society dearly in higher rates of dependence, poor health, and involvement in criminal activity. A high school drop out is eight times more likely to be in jail or prison as someone with a high school diploma. Reportedly over 90 percent of Yakima County inmates have not graduated from high school.

Median household incomes in Yakima County are significantly lower than area comparisons and 19 percent lower than the national average. Compared to Washington State, Yakima County has more non-high school graduates giving birth, more than twice as many working adults receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and a homeless population in 2007 of which almost 25 percent was under 18 years old.

From an economic investment perspective, Yakima's business community is noting that while a low median age population, a young working population and low wages could be encouraging to investment and starting a business in Yakima County, these factors are weighed against low

educational attainment levels, high drop-out rates and performance issues at regional schools, and crime rates above state and national levels. Economic forecasts for the Yakima region report some stability and even growth in the housing market and resilience in the agricultural market. Construction costs have reportedly dropped between 20 and 25 percent, which provides a great incentive to speedy finalization of our Educare of East Yakima plans, in order to take advantage of the current cost savings.

Further direct evidence of the need for Ready by Five's early learning program comes from the Yakima School District (YSD). Superintendent Ben Soria reports that last year YSD spent \$3.5 million on building the learning skills of the entering kindergarten class to the minimum level that would enable these specific children to benefit from kindergarten lessons. This school year, based on DIBELS scores, only 27 percent of the entering kindergarteners were kindergarten ready and only 19 percent from Ready by Five's five census tracts met the appropriate DIBELS benchmarks.

### Community Baseline Data

**East Yakima children and families.** East Yakima is home to 39 percent of the population of the City of Yakima, but to 52 percent of the children under age six. The 2000 U.S. census found 3,728 children aged birth through five in East Yakima, living in 982 family households. Approximately 650 babies are born in the five census tracts of our project area each year, a rate that is almost double that of the nation as a whole.

More than 50 percent of the children under age six in East Yakima live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level. This is a radically higher poverty rate than for the City of Yakima as a whole, where approximately 17 percent of families live below the poverty level.

The children of East Yakima are predominantly Hispanic. Between 80 and 90 percent of the students in the area's three elementary schools are Hispanic. The parent survey conducted in connection with planning this project found that 75 percent of East Yakima parents usually speak Spanish in their home (East Yakima Early Learning Initiative, 2007, pp. 7-9).

**Family and home settings.** Research by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., provides a baseline for the state of early learning and kindergarten readiness in East Yakima (Mathematica, Better Beginnings, 2008). Parents in East Yakima are generally dedicated to the family and work hard to provide the best environment for their children. However, they have limited access to quality child care, particularly for their infants, and to other resources. Mathematica's findings on factors that can affect children's school success include the following:

- Sixty-three percent of the parents of kindergarteners were not born in the United States, and of these, half of mothers and 41 percent of fathers have been in this country for less than 10 years.
- More than a third of the children live with only one parent.
- Nearly two-thirds of the families live in poverty.
- Three-quarters of mothers have less than a high school diploma or GED.

- Eighty percent of fathers and 54 percent of mothers worked at least part time.
- Forty percent of parents reported reading to their child in English; 36 percent said they speak to their child in English at home.
- More than half of parents said their children had been in Head Start. Fewer had been in Early Head Start (only 11 percent) or in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) (only 6 percent).
- Parents reported having an average of 25 children’s books at home, which is about the same as the national average.
- About 27 percent of parents of kindergarteners said they read to their child each day, as compared to 45 percent nationally.
- Nineteen percent of parents said their kindergartener watched two or more hours of television daily.
- Thirty percent of parents said their child of age six or younger has access to a computer at home.
- Fifty percent of the children were overweight.  
(Mathematica, *Better Beginnings*, 2008, pp. 3-7).

**School readiness.** The Mathematica researchers also used tools to determine what children in East Yakima know and can do at the beginning of kindergarten. They found that 60 percent of East Yakima kindergarteners showed risk for poor performance in school in two early literacy measures, and more than 40 percent showed risk in a measure of sound/word/picture match skills. However, ratings on several other school readiness measures were closer to the national averages. See the table below.

Yakima Public Schools uses the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Letter Naming Fluency tool to assess children entering kindergarten. It is given only in English. In 2006, the DIBELS showed that more than 50 percent of East Yakima English-speaking children and 70 percent of the bilingual Hispanic children were at risk for poor school achievement (ESD 105, 2006, p. 3).

**Table 2. School Readiness Measures of East Yakima Kindergarteners**

Measure	What’s Tested	% With Good Ratings	% At Risk
<i>Early Literacy</i>			
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (4 <sup>th</sup> Edition)	Matching pictures to spoken words	8% at or above national average	60%
Spanish Peabody Test	Matching pictures to spoken words	7% at or above national average	61%
Woodcock-Johnson Letter-Word Identification	Recognizing letters, connecting with sounds, reading simple words	33% at or above national average	21%
Woodcock-Johnson	Fine motor skills	51% at or above	18%

Measure	What's Tested	% With Good Ratings	% At Risk
Spelling Test	(writing letters, words)	national average	
DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency	Letters and sounds	--	50% English-only children  70% bilingual Spanish-speaking children
<b>Early Math</b>			
Woodcock-Johnson Applied Problems Test	Counting, addition, subtraction	14% at or above national average	44%
Cognitive-Social Scale, Leiter Examiner Rating Scale	Social and attention skills	--	18%
<b>Health</b>			
Health – Parents' ratings	Child's overall health	59% excellent or very good	11% fair or poor
Body Mass Index	Healthy weight		50% overweight

Sources: ESD 105, 2006, p. 3; Mathematica, *Better Beginnings*, 2008, pp. 7-8.

**Services in the community.** In a 2007 parent survey, East Yakima parents of young children reported a shortage of licensed child care and of programs for parent education and family support. They wanted more adult education programs, especially in Spanish literacy, mental health services and professional development for child care providers. Barriers that keep parents from getting access to the programs that do exist include: language (not enough programs in Spanish), mistrust of interpreters, lack of transportation, inconvenient hours, long waiting lists, and fear or mistrust of government.

The existing preschool programs in East Yakima included Head Start, ECEAP, a year-round school district program and a summer-only school district program. Most are open only part of the day. Child care is available from 14 Head Start, ECEAP and licensed child care centers, and 40 family child care homes. Together, they served about 175 infants and toddlers, and 800 preschoolers.

Four programs offered home visiting services for low-income pregnant women—First Steps, the Maternal Child Health Program, Nurse/Family Partnership and Early Head Start. Health clinics offered some parenting education programs, though not many in Spanish. Some workshops were available to offer professional development for early learning professionals (Mathematica, *Better Beginnings*, 2008, p. 9).

Under a new Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant, Ready by Five will be teaming up with the Yakima County Department of Community Services to participate in an updated needs assessment to be conducted later this year.

**Early learning professionals.** Most early childhood professionals in East Yakima range in age from mid-30s to early 40s. Fifty-four percent of teachers at child care centers and 96 percent of family child care providers are Hispanic. Seventy-nine percent of center directors are Anglo.

Child care center and preschool teachers in East Yakima tend to have more formal education than do family care providers. Most family child care providers (80%) do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Only four percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher. By contrast, most center and preschool teachers have a high school education. Seven percent of the center teachers and 35 percent of preschool teachers have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Despite having a lower level of formal education, family child care providers earn more than do center or preschool teachers. Family care providers earn about \$33,000, while center teachers earn \$12,300 and preschool teachers \$21,400. Forty-six percent of family child care providers and 44 percent of preschool teachers have health insurance through their job. However, none of the center teachers of infants and toddlers have health coverage (Mathematica, *Better Beginnings*, 2008, p. 10).

**Quality of care.** Mathematica used the Environmental Rating Scales to study the quality of child care settings in East Yakima. These scales are for different age groups and types of child care. The ratings are on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 for inadequate and 7 for excellent. The average scores at each of the three age ranges were in the “minimal to good” category, but with a fairly wide range. See the table below.

**Table 3. Ratings of East Yakima Child Care Quality**

Category	Avg. Score (1-7 scale)	Range	% Inadequate to Minimal	% Minimal to Good	% Good to Excellent	# Children per Teacher	Class Size
Family Child Care	3.3	1.5 to 5.2	31%	66%	4%	2.4 children/teacher	3.5 children
Centers: Infant-Toddler	3.5	1.9 to 5.8	14%	79%	7%	4.3 children/teacher	6 children
Preschool	4.5	1.9 to 6.0	16%	4%	43%	6 children/teacher	12.4 children

Source: Mathematica, *Better Beginnings*, 2008, p. 10.

## What Are the Lessons Learned To Date and How Are They Guiding the Work?

The children of East Yakima are born into an environment that makes it challenging for them to get a successful start in school. This is evidenced by the multiple risk factors that Mathematica documented, summarized above. However, the parent survey found that their parents are very interested in helping their children get the best start they can, and in improving their own education and parenting skills as well. Similarly, as described below, many East Yakima child care providers are interested in improving their knowledge and teaching skills. Therefore, Ready by Five has started working with parents and child care providers, capitalizing on their interest in improving their abilities and skills to create a rich learning environment for East Yakima children.

The small number of parents in East Yakima who are comfortably conversant in English emphasizes the critical need for bilingual personnel in the Ready by Five project. The cultural and economic gaps and the observed willingness to answer affirmatively to questions from a “perceived authority,” urges caution in accepting some of the baseline findings at face value. Our experience bears out the importance of great patience in service provision, and the need to repeat information and instructions several times to ensure intended comprehension.

A further lesson learned is that the very long hours some parents work during the agricultural harvest and processing season impose additional strains that they experience when trying to maintain Ready Child-conducive practices in their homes. This highlights the need for Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement Programs, such as Parent Support Groups and Creative Families Play & Learn, that provide a casual, low or no cost to the participants’ environment that is welcoming and offers shared opportunities to engage children in playful learning.

**Home-Based Early Learning.** Work done to date in Yakima has yielded some lessons and refinements of the HBEL strategy.

- ***EFS pilot.*** The Enhanced First Steps program coordinators from Yakima, White Center and Thrive by Five worked on creating the basic outline for the EFS curriculum. During the six-month pilot period from September 2008 through March 2009, the EFS staff continued to fill out and refine the curriculum based on input from EFS staff in the field on important risk factors to identify and information to collect. The curriculum has developed into a solid visit-by-visit guide for use in training staff, and to assure program replication with fidelity.
- ***Observation tool.*** Mathematica Policy Research consultants researched successful home visiting programs and devised a home visit observation tool to assist with development of the EFS program. The tool (HOVRS-A) is designed to provide feedback to the EFS home visiting team about their fidelity to the EFS curriculum model for both the quality and content of the visits. The observations were scored after Mathematica Policy Research consultants conducted home visits with each EFS staff member. The aggregated data have provided information to the EFS team about the observed strengths and challenges. In addition, individual home visitor scoring went to the agency EFS supervisors for one-on-one feedback to the home visitors. The planned series of three home visit observations

with each EFS staff member assures a high level of quality in our home visitor relationship skills and style with families.

- **Assessment tools.** Development of a final Universal Risk Assessment (URA) required field testing and reworking, but it is now underway. EFS and PAT staff members have received training in using this tool and now are completing the URA on all clients enrolled in the two programs. EFS is assisting the evaluators in getting an early “look” at the EFS population in Yakima by collecting and recording the URA data on Excel spreadsheets for analysis.
- **PAT early results.** PAT is already recording positive results with families using the Parenting Ladder Survey, Milestones Checklist, and ASQ Developmental Assessment.
- **Parents’ response.** Families in East Yakima have welcomed the home visiting programs and are eager to participate. There are many more families in the East Yakima area who want our services than Ready by Five will be able to address during the next two years, given current funding constraints. PAT, for example, already has reached its planned maximum enrollment for the next two years of 80 families.

**Child care quality improvement.** In the early months of 2008, Ready by Five, in partnership with Thrive by Five Washington, completed a QRIS environmental scan for DEL. The purpose was to determine the existing resources, systems and community support for QRIS. A community planning phase followed in which parents, child care providers, and community stakeholders were engaged in monthly planning meetings to develop a QRIS model for our demonstration community. Child care provider and parent forums were held to gather input for the community model, as well as to gauge the community’s readiness for a QRIS initiative. Ready by Five learned that most child care providers in East Yakima were eager to receive training, coaching and educational supports as soon as possible. Providers clearly expressed the need for a QRIS model to include additional funding to support their ability to attend classes and maintain their businesses in good standing. The needed resources included work release time and substitute caregivers. Providers indicated the need to have mentoring and/or coaching provided within the early learning setting. Taking this approach would serve two purposes—it would facilitate embedding professional development for better learning outcomes, and avoid disruptions to child care business hours.

The information gathered from the environmental scan and planning activities was incorporated into the final QRIS model, titled Seeds to Success. When DEL suspended funding for Seeds to Success, Thrive by Five committed to moving forward with the Seeds to Success Modified Field Test that would maintain the elements that were most important to the parents and providers, and that also had substantial research backing. The modified field test will target professional development, continuing education, degree attainment, embedded coaching, and additional grants for improving learning environments and assisting providers with extra support for attending classes.

In the Fall of 2008, Ready by Five recruited and enrolled the first cohort of providers in continuing education and Child Development Associate (CDA) coursework. Twenty providers participated in the screening process for placement into continuing education and/or the CDA program. Twelve of these providers are now CDA candidates.

When providers were recruited for participation in the first Seeds to Success QRIS program in November 2008, 35 out of 42 East Yakima licensed child care providers chose to enroll in the program. After providers learned of the suspended Seeds to Success Quality Improvement Rating System in December 2008, 33 providers remained committed to participating in the program. This demonstrates the strong commitment of East Yakima child care providers to increasing their education and improving the education and services they offer to the children in their care.

Ready by Five staff and coaches have continued to engage child care providers and have been successful in keeping the support and interest high in participating in the QRIS program.

**Kindergarten Transition.** The Kindergarten Transition Program held in 2008 proved to be a success. A total of 294 East Yakima children participated, along with 17 teachers in four East Yakima elementary schools. As documented in the post-program survey, children, families, teachers and principals appreciated the concentrated effort to ensure that the children were socially and emotionally ready for the big transition from informal preschool care and education into the K-12 system. Teachers and parents valued the opportunity the program afforded for an exclusive time to get together to discuss goals and expectations for kindergarten, as well as to get acquainted and begin their relationship with each other.

Some lessons learned include the need for ensuring that all teachers make home visits, that every effort possible be made to reach every entering kindergartener from our target community to invite them and their parents to participate, and that a better method be devised for teacher assessment of the kindergarteners' skills.

**Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement.** In late 2008, the Parent Support Programs launched Creative Families Play & Learn, the Parent Committee, Parent Support Groups and the Promotores Program of home visits. Lessons learned from the parents in East Yakima included affirmation of the parents' great interest in the new opportunities for children and for themselves to get their children ready for school. Parents are aware that their children perform at lower levels than necessary for success. The home visitors have a standardized survey form and the principal lessons learned include: the need for data analysis, the need to review the potential for a possible linkage to some of the questions being asked through HBEL on the URA, and the requirement for seeking assistance from our funders to develop a research program for this service. Initial activities also highlighted the great need of our client base for referral to other community resources and the value of the Promotores' access and knowledge of the community in alleviating human misery. One brief example is of a starving family helped with a referral by Ready by Five Promotores staff member, because the parents did not know their children were eligible for food stamps.

Another lesson learned is the need for constant input and feedback from participants. Participants shared their desire to participate in early learning programs and activities. A large number of participants commented that there were certain days, times and locations that would work better for them and that these times are dictated by the agricultural industry's seasons. After learning that parents were interested in having more options, Ready by Five responded by expanding the

outreach programs to accommodate more people. For example, in 2009, Creative Families Play & Learn will be held twice a month as opposed to once a month during 2008. Another Support Group was added to increase the total number of groups to three. The Parent Committee increased its participation and added new members to replace members that were no longer attending. With the addition of the Promotores has come the development of more intimate relationships with our community's families and an increase in their awareness of programs offered by Ready by Five in East Yakima.

Work with the Parent Committee suggests the need for a rethinking of its role and structure and the beginning of the new fiscal year, and some changes in programmatic emphasis offers an opportunity for implementation of these lessons learned.

### Focus of Effort for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011

The Ready by Five partnership is working to surround children with high-quality early learning environments so they arrive at kindergarten school-ready. In Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, Ready by Five will work with parents and child care providers in East Yakima in four main endeavors:

- Developing a shared understanding of the Ready Child and improving kindergarten transition.
- Providing home-based early learning services for East Yakima families.
- Building quality improvement for all those who care for and teach young children.
- Building parent engagement in their children's education.

In addition, Ready by Five's staff, service providers and stakeholders will work to:

- Build community engagement in improving early learning.
- Develop a sustainable infrastructure for a system of early learning service delivery and support.
- Contribute to the knowledge base about early learning.
- Promote cultural relevance and competency in all aspects of the project.

Underlying and at the core of this work is Ready by Five's goal to address the need for every child in East Yakima to have the high-quality early learning experiences that will lead to school readiness and success.

### Community's Work as an Effective Means to Address Needs

The strategies Ready by Five proposes to use will be effective because they are consistent with research findings that:

- ***Learning starts at birth.*** Ready by Five's HBEL strategy will work with expectant parents and parents of very young children, and with child care providers of infants and toddlers, to improve their ability to support children's early learning.
- ***Early relationships are paramount to a child's ability to learn.*** Ready by Five's HBEL, Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement Programs, and our work with early learning professionals will support them in developing strong parent/caregiver-child relationships.

- ***Trained, educated and supported staff are more effective and increase the quality of care.*** Ready by Five's strategy for building Quality Improvement includes one-on-one coaching of providers, education and training, support services, and access to learning materials. Training for staff in all other service areas is standardized at a high level of preparation.
- ***A rich learning environment facilitates early learning.*** Ready by Five's HBEL, Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement Programs, and Quality Improvement work with licensed providers will help parents and providers learn how to provide this kind of learning environment.
- ***Children are more likely to obtain language and literacy skills through intentional teaching based on proven practices.*** Ready by Five's strategies include Early Literacy training and Creative Curriculum training with licensed care providers, home visitors, parent support staff, and partners.
- ***Children's social-emotional competence and skills are critical to later success in school and life.*** Ready by Five's HBEL, and Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement Programs will help parents build strong relationships with their children, and the Quality Improvement efforts with providers will help them support their children's social-emotional development.
- ***Support, information and practice enhance an adult's ability to have a secure relationship with a child and be an effective facilitator of early learning.*** Ready by Five's strategies working with parents and child care providers will offer support, information and opportunities for practice.
- ***Services are more effective and better accessed when culturally appropriate and responsive.*** Ready by Five will take steps to promote cultural relevance and competency in all of its strategies and outreach with families and child care providers.

### Direct Beneficiaries and Geographic Areas Reached

Ready by Five's efforts focus in the five census tracts, 1, 2, 3, 6 and 15 of the East Yakima community. The beneficiaries of the work in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 will be children, families and licensed child care providers in East Yakima. As noted above under Community Baseline Data, East Yakima is home to approximately 3,700 children aged birth through five years. There are four Head Start/ECEAP centers, 10 licensed child care centers, including one of the four Head Start centers that are licensed, and 40 licensed family child care homes in East Yakima.

### Key Partners and Subcontractors

Ready by Five is extremely proud of the high-quality partners who have agreed to participate in various key roles for this project. In 2008, prior to implementing service delivery, all 42 Stakeholders were contacted in writing to reaffirm the level of their interest in remaining a Stakeholder in Ready by Five, and to determine their experience, capability and commitment in providing particular services for at least two years to Ready by Five. This process has been repeated in January and February of 2009 with visits by Ready by Five's Executive Director and Community Liaison to each Stakeholder agency. Follow-up letters have been sent to each Stakeholder and signed responses indicating their agreement to participate are currently being

received. An annual Stakeholder meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2009. A Stakeholder Policies and Procedures manual is under development that will address such issues as inclusion of additional Stakeholders and causes for termination of the Stakeholder relationship. The organizations currently providing services are all well-established and have great records of growth and contributions to the Yakima community. The following updated organizational descriptions were provided by the participating Program Provider Partners to give their history and a perspective on the breadth and depth of the services they perform for our community.

See Table 3 below for a list of the services that each of these organizations currently provides for the Ready by Five effort.

**Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic (YVFWC).** Among the largest community/migrant health centers in the nation, YVFWC is a 330-funded Federal Qualified Health Center with main headquarters located in Toppenish, Washington. Founded in 1978, the mission of the YVFWC is to improve the quality of life for unserved and underserved populations by providing comprehensive, collaborative and culturally competent health care services. YVFWC provides medical, dental, mental health, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse treatment, WIC, Community Health and enabling services.

In 2008, YVFWC served more than 110,000 unduplicated medical and dental users in more than 400,000 total service encounters. Of these, 64 percent were Hispanic, 48 percent non-English-speaking, and 41 percent migrant and seasonal farm workers or dependents.

**Yakima Neighborhood Health Services (YNHS).** YNHS is a nonprofit Community Health Center founded in 1975 that provides preventive health care and education to low-income people in Yakima.

An average of 500 patients and clients are served each day by primary care medical, dental and public health providers in the Yakima and Sunnyside offices, as well as at the Neighborhood Connections (Health Care for the Homeless) clinic. The YNHS staff of pediatricians, family practitioners, internists, nurse practitioners, dentists, and a full complement of community health nurses, dietitians, counselors and health educators work to support families with their health care needs. The dramatic level of medical, dental and public health services provided continues to verify the need for service to the disadvantaged of the Yakima Valley. YNHS Access Specialists assist uninsured families to identify potential sources of health coverage, and to learn to maneuver the health care system in Yakima County.

YNHS also provides transitional and permanent supportive housing to formerly homeless individuals and families through private and public sources, including the McKinney-Vento Act, Housing Trust Fund, and the Washington Families Fund.

**Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital (YVMH).** YVMH is a nonprofit hospital offering comprehensive medical and surgical care through 300 primary care and specialty physicians, as well as 1,400 skilled nurses, therapists, technicians and other health care and business professionals. The hospital was founded in 1950 by a group of local citizens, and it has grown to 225 beds and serves more than 130,000 patients annually. There are many other facilities in

Yakima that are now part of the services provided by Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, including a large cancer treatment facility (North Star Lodge), and Children's Village, which serves children with special health care needs.

Continually striving for improvements in health care provision, Memorial Hospital's accomplishments have gained nationwide recognition and resulted in many awards including: Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work for in America (2003); the 2001 award as One of the Best Companies to Work For in Washington State, presented by the *Washington CEO* magazine; the National Communities Can! Award for outstanding collaboration; and the American Hospitals Association's national NOVA award for leadership in creating Children's Village.

**Yakima School District (YSD).** The Yakima School District is located primarily within the boundaries of the City of Yakima. Serving a diverse population of nearly 15,000 students, Yakima is the eighteenth largest district in Washington, the second largest in Eastern Washington, and the largest Latino-majority district in the state.

Every elementary school in the district provides all-day, every day kindergarten classes. In addition: seven magnet programs are offered with concentrations in science and communication, international studies and the arts; International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs at two high schools attract students from out of the district; an already strong vocational program is growing every day with a new state-of-the-art skills center in the construction phase; and alternative offerings include a School of the Arts, Yakima Online! and the Yakima Home School Partnership.

Benjamin Soria, Yakima School District's Superintendent, was named Washington State's 2006 Superintendent of the Year. Twenty-seven teachers have earned the prestigious National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification.

**Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC).** Since it began in 1928, YVCC has focused continually on student success. The college values its role in building the future of the Yakima Valley. The college's part in that future is tied to the success of every student who enters its doors. Students may be enrolled in Yakima or Grandview, or at one of more than a dozen learning centers, or through the interactive Web-based classes as the college becomes more integrated with multiple distance-learning options. However and wherever students learn, the college is committed to providing access, instructional and technological quality, and the support services which will ensure student success.

YVCC's vision for the future is to actively engage in responding to student needs, building community internally and externally, integrating technology, embracing mutual respect, and promoting effective learning. Whether students come for basic education, developmental needs, language proficiency, job skills or transfer programs, meeting their needs is YVCC's primary mission. YVCC's excellent faculty and staff, along with community partners of the Yakima Valley, assist students in acquiring the knowledge needed to be skilled professionals in the workforce of the 21st century.

**La Casa Hogar – Yakima Interfaith Coalition.** The Sisters of Providence provided resources in 1995 to launch La Casa Hogar. La Casa Hogar’s mission is to empower low-income Hispanic women and children through education. In 2006, the current facility was purchased and is the heart of the organization’s success as expressed in La Casa Hogar’s mission statement: *Working together as an expression of faith, our home nurtures strong communities’ one person at a time.*

La Casa Hogar’s programs include a variety of services and benefits for those new to the United States, such as classes in English, driving, Spanish literacy, GED preparation, computer literacy, health, and parenting education and support. While parents are learning, their preschool children are participating in La Casa Hogar’s children’s learning center. The purposes of the center are to prepare children for school and to empower mothers to be active participants in their children’s education. In the 2009 winter quarter, 189 women were enrolled in classes and 58 children used the learning center. A staff of 6.2 FTE (six are former program participants) supported more than 11,000 student hours of educational services for nearly 500 women and children, and provided 1,875 households with emergency assistance.

**Table 4. Ready by Five's Implementing Contractors by Strategy, 2009**

STRATEGIES	PROVIDER - CONTRACTOR SELECTED OR DIRECT (READY BY FIVE)
<b>Community-Wide</b>	
Promotores (formerly Strategy #1) Promotores staff personnel recruited and managed for HR purposes by 3 contracting partners; housed primarily at Rb5 office	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support (Management Only) Yakima Neighborhood Health Services (2 Promotores) Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic (1 Promotore) La Casa Hogar/Yakima Interfaith Coalition (1 Promotore)
<b>Parent Education and Support</b>	
Home Visitors – Parents as Teachers (PAT) (Formerly Strategy 2A)	Catholic Family & Child Service
Home Visitors – Enhanced First Steps (EFS) - Service jointly provided by 3 contracting partners (Formerly Strategy 2B)	Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
Home Visitors – Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) - Service jointly provided by 2 contracting partners (Formerly Strategy 2C)	Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
Strategy 3. Parent Groups	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support
<b>Children's Early Learning</b>	
Educare (Formerly Strategy 7)	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support - Planning Phase Only
Curricula – Creative Curriculum (Formerly Strategy 8A)	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support
Curricula – A Supplemental Early Literacy Curriculum (Formerly Strategy 8B)	Strategy Deferred
Kindergarten Transition Program (Formerly Strategy 10)	Yakima School District
<b>Quality Improvement</b>	
Professional Development System/QRIS (Combines former Strategies Nos. 9 & 11)	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support
Provider Professional Development (Combines former Strategies Nos. 12 & 13)	Yakima Valley Community College (for delivery of formal classes)
Educational Scholarships (Formerly Strategy 14)	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support
Seeds to Success Quality Improvement Grants (New 2009 Strategy)	Direct – Rb5 Staff Support

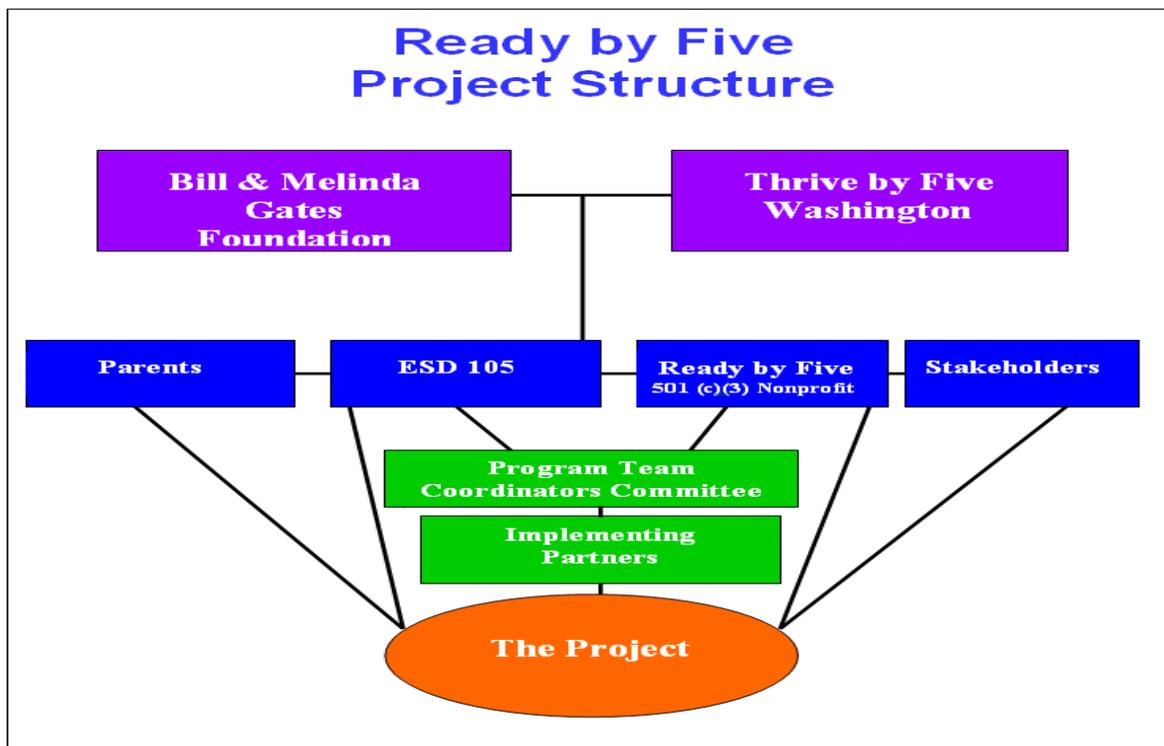
## IV. Governance Plan

### Governance: Function, Structure and Accountability

At this time, Ready by Five, the demonstration early learning project in Yakima, has four interlinked systems of governance that ensure function, structure and accountability and also provide programmatic direction. These are:

- 1) Fiscal and programmatic governance established by our principal funders, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington.
- 2) Fiscal and personnel policy governance established by the fiscal intermediary for the funders' grant, ESD 105.
- 3) Programmatic governance through our provider oversight committee, the Program Team Coordinators Committee (PTCC).
- 4) Fiscal, policy, programmatic and administrative governance provided by the Board of Directors of Ready by Five, the 501(c)(3) corporation that oversees the planning and provision of services for the early learning program in the demonstration community of East Yakima.

Ready by Five operates in a collaborative and integrated manner with all these governing entities and our many other community Stakeholders and provider partners. Please see the graphic and text below that illustrates and describes in detail the current governance structure, plan and operating relationships.



## Governance Plan

**Roles.** The information below describes the roles each entity has in the function, structure and accountability for Governance.

- Funds flow from the Gates Foundation and Thrive, the funders, to ESD 105.
- Ready by Five, the nonprofit, under the governance of its community Board, and in collaboration with its Stakeholders (which include ESD 105 and provider partners) and with the Gates Foundation and Thrive, coordinates program delivery to the Ready by Five early learning initiative.
- Funds flow from ESD105 to the Provider Partners at the request of Ready by Five after review of services rendered, hours worked and outcomes achieved.
- The Program Team Coordinators Committee provides oversight, guidance and counsel on program delivery and is a forum for the implementing partners who jointly deliver project services on behalf of Ready by Five. Implementing Provider Partners include contracted services and personnel from provider/Stakeholder agencies.
- A draft Provider Partner Agreement is in Appendix D, and now that the Early Learning Network Agreement is complete and can be an essential part of a Provider Partner Agreement, these Agreements with Provider Partners will be put in place with the ESD 105, at the request and acknowledgement of Ready by Five.

**Communication to funders.** Ready by Five reports and communicates to the funders, the Gates Foundation and Thrive, for their activities and on behalf of the Provider Partners of the Ready by Five project. In addition to outcome reporting requirements from our funders, Ready by Five requires monthly reports of clients served from its implementing partners and hours expended for dollars earned. Information on service delivery for the Ready by Five project flows from the Provider Partners through Ready by Five (the nonprofit and its Board), to the ESD 105 and the funders.

**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington – Governance by Our Funders.** While it may not be thought of as a formal part of the governance structure, our funders appropriately create a governance overlay of fiscal and programmatic accountability by establishing funding limits, funding priorities, budgetary guidelines, goals and expectations for performance, outcome measurements and reporting requirements.

Ready by Five coordinates the data collection for the provider agencies and is happy to comply with what we understand is to be a quarterly reporting system for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, and to provide monthly reports of clients served. We also understand that standard templates for both narrative and financial reports will be utilized and that these reports will serve both the Gates Foundation and Thrive.

In its coordinating management role to ensure provision of services for the Ready by Five early learning initiative, Ready by Five has conveyed the Funders' initiatives and plans, constraints and funding capabilities to our providers, and worked with them to facilitate program development and delivery within the guidelines established by the Funders.

**Educational Service District 105 (ESD 105).** ESD 105 has served an integral role in establishing Ready by Five and in providing the basic infrastructure and support that has nurtured a strong organization, which is now able to implement the early learning initiative in East Yakima. At this point, all funds from the Gates Foundation and Thrive for the early learning demonstration project in East Yakima are under the financial and policy controls of the Board of ESD 105.

ESD 105 was elected by the initial 42 stakeholders to be the intermediary agency for management of the Gates Foundation and Thrive donor funds to the Ready by Five project. As a result, ESD 105 is the employer of Ready by Five personnel, the payor of Ready by Five's financial obligations, the supplier to Ready by Five of accounting, Information Technology (IT), phone services and human resources, and the contracting agency for Ready by Five's contracted provider services. The Bylaws of ESD 105 and Washington State's financial policies and procedures govern Ready by Five's payroll and benefits, expense reimbursements, processing of contractual obligations to providers, etc., for the expenditure of funds from Thrive and Gates, because ESD 105 is bound by Washington State employee and fiscal policies and regulations. ESD 105 is also subject to an annual audit by the Washington State Auditors Office.

A very collaborative relationship exists between ESD 105 and Ready by Five, particularly between the accounting and administrative staffs of both organizations. Other non-governance services are also provided by ESD 105 to Ready by Five through use of staff and physical resources, and ESD 105 has helped Ready by Five staff leverage their capabilities in this way.

Personnel decisions for Ready by Five are made by the Executive Director, Helen Marieskind, in accordance with ESD 105's personnel policies and in consultation with ESD 105's Director of Human Resources. The actual selection of the Executive Director for Ready by Five is made by the Board of Ready by Five, of which the ESD 105 Superintendent is a member, and the terms of employment conform with ESD 105 policies.

Recognizing the complexity of the governance roles and responsibilities between the ESD 105 Board and the Board of the nonprofit, Ready by Five, on April 16, 2008, Ready by Five, the nonprofit corporation, formally accepted specific delegations of authority as specified in ESD 105's Resolution No. 202 of February 19, 2008, to clarify the relationship as follows:

- 1) To review and recommend approval of all business plans and related budgets to the ESD 105 Board for final approval prior to submission to grantors or contracting parties.
- 2) To provide strategic level management oversight for the ongoing East Yakima Early Learning program, including: conduct of regular financial spending reviews, approval of operational plans, and the monitoring of activities under the grants.
- 3) To approve the selection and terms of employment for the Executive Director, the top leadership position for the East Yakima Early Learning program.

*Please note that the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative is the former name of Ready by Five.*

**Program Team Coordinators Committee (PTCC).** The Program Team Coordinators Committee (PTCC) is a collaboration between the Ready by Five Executive Director, Ready by Five Program Directors and representatives from each of the main Ready by Five programmatic

areas, plus a representative from EPIC's Crisis Nursery. The PTCC meets monthly to review programmatic progress, outcomes and any outstanding issues. Program providers are selected by Ready by Five's Executive Director and the Director of Finance and Operations in consultation with members of the PTCC. Providers for Ready by Five programs have, to date, been drawn from our Stakeholders. Please see Appendix F for copies of the confirmation letters received in 2008 in response to a letter to our Stakeholders requesting a confirmation of their willingness and intent to be a Ready by Five service provider and/or a Stakeholder. These commitments are presently being reconfirmed with a written request to all Stakeholders. Providers are chosen based on the criteria of:

- Provider's willingness to serve under the standard partnership provisions discussed below.
- Provider's prior local service provision experience.
- Provider's knowledge of our community and target population.
- Provider's demonstrated ability to achieve desired program goals.
- Provider's demonstrated ability and willingness to participate in Ready by Five's data collection requirements.
- Provider's ability to guarantee a minimum of two years' of service provision to Ready by Five clients.

Ongoing program performance is reviewed by the PTCC as part of its responsibility to help coordinate program decisions for Ready by Five service delivery.

During development of our Ready by Five early learning initiative, a Board-appointed committee developed principles for partnership agreements between providers and Ready by Five. These core principles have formed the basis for crafting Ready by Five's contractual agreements with the providers. The agreements will include requirements for completion of a client consent form and, where applicable, participation in the Early Learning Network Agreement (ELNA) on data sharing. These provider agreements will ultimately be signed by ESD 105 and acknowledged by Ready by Five. Please see Appendix D for a copy of the draft Provider Partner Agreement (which is subject to final legal review and Board approval).

In 2009, we will be preparing Provider Partner Agreements with the Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital (YVMH), with Catholic Family & Childcare Service (CF & CS), Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic (YVFWC), Yakima Neighborhood Health Services (YNHS) and La Casa Hogar (LCH) as provider agencies for Ready by Five services. Some of the key elements the agreement will incorporate include:

- Principles for partnership agreement.
- Description of services to be provided both in type and dosage.
- Key contact person, title and contact information.
- Expected performance measures and outcomes.

The contractors will have prime operating responsibility for their outcomes. Ready by Five will act in a coordinating and oversight capacity together with the PTCC and will use data reports to

verify satisfactory provider performance. A minimum of bi-monthly provider meetings will be held to assess ongoing provider and Ready by Five satisfaction with service provision.

In addition to service providers' own systems for addressing client satisfaction, Ready by Five intends to conduct a client satisfaction survey with the assistance of parents from our community.

**Ready by Five Board of Directors.** Ready by Five, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, is incorporated in the State of Washington and holds the assigned UBI No. 602-726-910 and Internal Revenue Service Employer Identification Number of 26-1226738. See Appendix G for a copy of the IRS nonprofit determination letter. The nonprofit corporation, Ready by Five, is governed by a Board of Directors, representing Stakeholders and community members. The Articles of Incorporation stipulate a minimum of 12 Directors; currently, there are 23 Directors serving on the Board. The Board is responsible for the strategic level planning and oversight of activities under the Gates/Thrive grants, subject to final approval by the ESD 105 Board, per the delegation of authority described above under the ESD 105 governance section. The Ready by Five Board is also directly responsible for the administration of funds that are received from other funding sources.

The Board meets monthly and addresses matters of governance, strategy and finance. There are two standing committees of the Board (Executive and Finance), and three ad-hoc committees (building, public relations/speakers' bureau, and board nominating); all make recommendations to the Board for action. Board membership and committee composition are described below.

The seven-member Executive Committee meets monthly. All members are also members of the Board of Directors and represent the major provider stakeholder groups in Ready by Five.

The three-member Finance Committee also meets monthly. One member, the managing partner of LeMaster Daniels, one of the largest and most prominent accounting firms in Yakima that serves nonprofit organizations, is a non-voting and non-Board member. Monthly financial reports are reviewed by the Finance Committee in detail. Upon approval by the Finance Committee, the reports are presented to the Board, verbally summarized at the Board meeting by the Treasurer and a recommendation is made by the Treasurer for approval. The full Board reviews and approves the financial reports.

A monthly report on organizational accomplishments and outstanding issues is written by the Executive Director with staff input and is presented to the full Board. A monthly report of performance outcomes is also prepared, and in 2009 will be made available to the Board.

In addition, for funds directly received from other funders, Ready by Five, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, has a separate system of governance and accountability through its Board of Directors and Board appointed committees.

In the future, for purposes of building a sustainable, independent, community-based non-profit that can both buy and provide services in the most cost-effective manner for serving the early learning community's needs in Yakima, Ready by Five would like to further explore developing

a direct administration model for all of our funding. This future model would then also include funding from our current principal funders, the Gates Foundation and Thrive. This will be of especially critical importance to Ready by Five in conjunction with the eventual establishment and staffing of Educare of East Yakima, although this is not part of the current proposal.

## V. Results and Implementation

Ready by Five has one overarching goal that is above all others. Our goal is to get the high-risk children of East Yakima ready for success in school and life. We know that this school year, only 19 percent of entering kindergarteners from East Yakima were assessed as being ready for kindergarten by their DIBELS scores. We hope that we can be part of seeing that score climb.

### Ready by Five Goals and Outcomes

Goals, both broad and long-term, and outcomes—direct benefit, generative, learning and long-term—are presented in the Logic Model attached as Appendix A. They are summarized in this section.

**Overarching goals.** The overarching goals of Ready by Five are that:

- All children in East Yakima will be ready for school.
- Families will be supported and empowered to be their children’s first teachers.
- Professional development opportunities will be available to early learning providers.
- That the community will understand the value of early learning and take responsibility for advancing early learning opportunities for all children.

**Long-term outcomes.** The project has identified the following long-term outcomes:

- More children are meeting identified benchmarks.
- Parents are valued and equipped as the first and most significant teacher of their child.
- Children are healthy and meet their developmental stages.
- Families provide a safe, supportive home, nurturing strong relationships with their child from birth.
- Neighborhoods and communities support children and families with a friendly safe environment.
- High quality early learning environments are promoted in all of the child’s natural learning settings.
- The demonstration project can be reasonably sustained and replicated operationally and economically.
- The community achieves a high degree of collaboration.

### Key Indicators and Target Dates

The key indicators, milestones and target dates for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 include the following:

- ***Improving kindergarten transition.*** Seventy-five percent of East Yakima children will transition appropriately into kindergarten. Milestones include providing an orientation for kindergarten teachers on home visiting and data collection, and recruiting children and families to attend the Kindergarten Transition Program. The program will take place in the summers of 2009 and 2010, with evaluations and a report to be completed the following January.
- ***Building quality improvement.*** Eighty-five percent of providers for Fiscal Year 2010 and 100 percent of providers for Fiscal Year 2011, who are in the coaching cohort, will receive teaching and coaching on the characteristics of the Ready Child and the skills and strategies necessary to support development of the Ready Child at kindergarten entry. Milestones include enrolling providers for training and educational programs as reflected in their Quality Improvement Plans, and cycles of teaching, practicing, observation/evaluation and re-teaching.
- ***Providing home-based early learning services.*** A total of 50 families will participate in NFP, 133 in EFS, and 80 families in PAT. These activities expect to reach their enrollment targets by December 31, 2010 or before, and to continue work with these families during the two fiscal years. During Fiscal Year 2011, 98 percent of NFP families will enroll no later than 28 weeks gestation; 90 percent of children served in EFS will meet or exceed the baseline TAS-45 scores for low-income populations; 90 percent of PAT families will show improvement on items in the Parenting Ladder survey.
- ***Building parent engagement.*** The Promotores will complete 1,500 home visits and follow-up activities in Fiscal Year 2010. By the end of Fiscal Year 2011, 100 percent of families being visited with children under age five will have had a minimum of three contacts per year. Milestones include conducting pre-evaluations, engaging families to participate in Creative Families Play & Learn events and parent support groups, and completing post-evaluations with 120 families. Twenty-four Creative Families Play & Learn events and 48 parent support groups will take place each year.
- ***Cultural relevance.*** One hundred percent of families served will have access to services in their primary language in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011.

For a complete, detailed list of indicators, milestones and target dates, see the Activity/Milestone Charts in Appendix B.

### External Factors/Risks

There are a number of external factors that could pose a risk to the success of the plan for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011. These factors include the following:

- ***Economy.*** The serious economic downturn in the entire nation in 2009 is likely to affect the service providers and partner organizations that are to contribute to this project. State and local governments face staffing and service cut-backs, and schools are retrenching.

These cutbacks could affect their ability to participate in the ways they had previously intended.

- ***Unemployment.*** The economic downturn has also brought layoffs in many companies, higher unemployment rates, and increased difficulties in finding work. These conditions are likely to affect families and licensed child care provider businesses in East Yakima in one way or another, and parents may have less time and energy to participate in the parent involvement strategies. Licensed child care providers may need to reduce the number of hours they are open and possibly close down their operations. However as many of our families work in agriculture, they may be more insulated from the economic downturn.
- ***Immigration policies.*** The new federal administration may change and/or the economic climate may affect the nation's immigration policies and enforcement in ways that impact families in East Yakima.
- ***Relocation.*** In times of economic upheaval, families may relocate to find better opportunities to make a living. It is possible that some participants in Ready by Five's programs will drop out for this reason.
- ***Project funding.*** The economic downturn has resulted in a reduction of the hoped-for funding for Ready by Five. As a result, the number of families to be served by some of the strategies will be smaller than originally planned.
- ***Partners' funding limitations.*** Many agencies participating in Ready by Five will be increasingly supporting their work in the Ready by Five project from their own budgets, for costs that exceed their Ready by Five contract payments. Given the economic downturn and its impact on agency revenues and outside fundraising, they may decide they need to shift to a lower level of activity in the project.
- ***Community expectations for service.*** Members of the East Yakima community may have an expectation of higher levels of service than Ready by Five can provide at this stage. This might have an impact on parents' willingness to participate in the program and on Ready by Five's credibility with the community.

## VI. Detailed Work Plans

### Program Implementation and Scope

In Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, Ready by Five's work will focus on these eight strategies:

- 1.0 Shared responsibility and accountability for the Ready Child.
- 2.0 Build and support quality improvement for all of those who care for and teach young children.
- 3.0 Provide home-based early learning services for families in East Yakima.
- 4.0 Build parent engagement.
- 5.0 Build community engagement.
- 6.0 Develop sustainable infrastructure for a new system of early learning service delivery and support.
- 7.0 Contribute to the early learning knowledge base.
- 8.0 Promote cultural relevance and competency.

These strategies are described below. See Appendix B for Activities and Milestones charts, which provide more detail for each strategy.

#### Strategy 1.0 Ready Child

This strategy includes Ready Yakima and Kindergarten Transition Program. **Ready Yakima** (Activity 1.1), a coalition of early learning providers, kindergarten teachers, principals, and other leaders in the early learning field, will come to consensus on the definition of a "ready child." They will support each other in the quest to have all children in East Yakima ready for school. This is an important step to have a meaningful, preschool through third grade (P-3) alignment between the early learning field and the K-12 system.

Also under Ready Yakima, a **collaboration** (Activity 1.1.1) of Ready by Five, Enterprise for Progress in the Community (EPIC, which operates Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Yakima), and others will work to develop a shared and clear understanding of the necessary skills and abilities of the Ready Child at kindergarten entry that will ensure school success. Ready by Five also will implement and document a focused effort to improve a pilot set of ECEAP preschool children's early literacy development activities as part of this collaboration. Staff from all agencies included in this collaboration will meet regularly to explore data together and receive training on best practices and strategies in order to increase children's literacy skills as they enter kindergarten.

This strategy also includes training in early literacy and in Creative Curriculum (Activities 1.1.2 and 1.1.3). An **early literacy curriculum**, yet to be chosen, will provide a model for high-quality early learning. The curriculum can be used in a variety of settings, including early learning providers, family child care, with home visitors, and by the early learning quality improvement

coaches. ***Creative Curriculum*** is a comprehensive, scientifically-based curriculum that has been shown to improve the cognitive, social/emotional outcomes in young children. The philosophy of this curriculum is designed around a family centered, developmentally appropriate approach to early learning.

Under the ***Kindergarten Transition Program*** (Activity 1.2), children entering kindergarten in East Yakima will attend school for a half-day for two weeks prior to the first official day of school. During these two weeks, the children will learn routines, procedures and expectations of the kindergarten classroom. Ready by Five will provide transportation for pre-K East Yakima children to participate. In addition, the Kindergarten Transition Program will make it possible for kindergarten teachers to visit the homes of East Yakima pre-K children to establish relationships with the parents and caregivers.

## Strategy 2.0 Quality Improvement

Ready by Five will implement a ***Quality Improvement System*** (Activity 2.1) to support increased knowledge and skills of licensed care providers. ***Coaching*** (Activity 2.1.1) will provide one-to-one help for licensed providers to increase their knowledge, training and skill level as effective facilitators of early learning. ***Education and training*** (Activity 2.1.2) will be offered through a menu of training and college coursework, including: Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language; CONEVyT Spanish literacy courses with early childhood training; the CDA college course with I-BEST support; and college coursework in the Early Childhood Education A.A. and B.A. tracks. ***Support services*** (Activity 2.1.3) will include two hours of individual ***coaching*** from a Quality Improvement (QI) Coach for each provider assigned to the coaching cohort. Providers assigned to the professional development cohort will receive support through assistance from QI management for registering and enrolling in training and coursework, and through coordinated referrals from Ready by Five to the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency. ***Early Learning Providers Lending Library*** (Activity 2.1.4) will give child care providers access to a wide range of early learning materials and resources.

Outreach to informal caregivers, known as Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers, will continue through existing parent support and engagement activities. When possible, FFN caregivers will be invited to participate in professional development activities offered to licensed child care providers. The lending library will be made available to FFN caregivers in order to provide them access to a variety of early learning materials at no cost. Ready by Five, with Child Care Resource and Referral as a lead partner, will continue holding community FFN Workgroup meetings in order to intentionally integrate FFN caregivers into existing parent programs.

***Ready by Five Staff Professional Development*** (Activity 2.3) will provide opportunities for staff to increase their learning through facilitated professional development and educational goal-setting. Each employee will develop an Employee Quality Improvement Plan (EQUIP) to indicate the individual's professional goals, ongoing training and education relevant to the employee's position, and activities and timelines that will guide completion of the plan.

Implementation and tracking of position-specific orientation and training will ensure that all existing and new Ready by Five employees have basic agency-required training, as well as the required in-service training needed to be successful and productive employees.

### Strategy 3.0 Home-Based Early Learning

This strategy will include three programs: Nurse Family Partnership, Enhanced First Steps, and Parents as Teachers. These programs coordinate activities as the group of Home-Based Early Learning (HBEL) programs (Activity 3.1).

*Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)* (Activity 3.1.1) offers intensive home visits by nurses during a woman's first pregnancy up to the infant's second birthday. Visits are designed for both the woman and her partner/spouse. NFP home visitors involve the client's support system, including family members and friends. NFP is designed to help women improve their prenatal health and pregnancy outcomes and maximize the care they provide to their infants and toddlers to improve the child's health and development. It also supports the woman's own personal development, including family planning, educational achievement and parents' participation in the workforce.

Eligibility for NFP is based on a woman being a low-income, first-time mom, and less than 28 weeks into her pregnancy. Research has shown the program to be effective with all first-time moms, but has achieved the greatest effects with at-risk and high-risk families.

NFP home visitors are Registered Nurses who receive training in the Olds Model and the *Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE)* curriculum. NFP supervisors have received training in Reflective Supervision. As part of the Yakima HBEL group of services, NFP staff members are also trained in the Promoting First Relationships and Bridges Out of Poverty curricula.

Another defining characteristic of NFP is strict adherence to the NFP model, which includes intensive training of nursing staff and visit-by-visit guidelines to assure fidelity to the model. This consistent approach at any site replicating the NFP program model helps assure that NFP continues to have a significant positive impact on families that continues long after the families graduate from the program. Ongoing data collection provides feedback to the NFP Nurse Supervisor related to program fidelity and outcome measures.

NFP nurses carry a caseload of no more than 25 families due to the intensive amount of service per family that is part of the NFP model. NFP clients receive an average of two visits per month, and visits continue until the child's second birthday. The program and the visits are based on a trusting relationship between the nurse and client. Home visit content includes:

- Parents receive education to learn to effectively advocate for their children.
- Parents receive education to encourage and assist their children's learning.
- Parents are encouraged to continue their own learning and educational attainment.
- Education to facilitate the health and development of children.
- Education to access community resources and supports, including nutritious food, primary medical care, and mental health services.
- Support for healthy pregnancy and access to early prenatal care.
- Education and support for improved parent/child interaction.

The Yakima NFP program collects and reports data on all clients served to the National Nurse Family Partnership organization. In addition, the Yakima NFP program will report client data to Ready by Five and Thrive by Five as part of Yakima's HBEL programs.

Ready by Five's implementation plan for NFP is to enroll pregnant women and their children, up to a total of 50 families in 2009. The 50-family enrollment will be sustained until June 2011, or until added funding becomes available to enroll and serve more families.

***Enhanced First Steps (EFS)*** (Activity 3.1.2) is a two-year, intensive, relationship-based, home visiting program that will build on and enhance services for higher risk, low-income women and their children currently eligible for the Medicaid-funded Washington State First Steps program. First Steps funding is limited in the number of visits allowed, and ends at two months post-delivery. EFS is a demonstration project that combines the service capacity of a publicly funded program and enhances it with private funding to increase the potential for early learning outcomes.

EFS provides multidisciplinary professional assessments, education and referrals to pregnant, postpartum, and parenting women and their families by an all-professional, First Steps trained staff. The staff include: Community Health Nurses (RNs), Behavioral Health Specialists (BHSs), and Registered Dietitians (RDs). EFS builds on the regular First Steps curriculum with longer and more frequent visits, and continues until the child's second birthday.

EFS home visiting content includes education and intervention for:

- Maternal, prenatal, and child health.
- Role strain, depression and healthy coping.
- Parent-infant relationship.
- Benefits of social support, father involvement.
- Parenting practices.
- Infant cues and development.
- Self-efficacy and goal-setting.
- Education and supports for accessing community resources and services.
- PIPE curriculum.
- Promoting First Relationships curriculum.
- Infant/toddler development.
- Role of first teacher and teaching through play.

The EFS leadership in Yakima, in collaboration with White Center, has developed a visit-by-visit curriculum intended to promote maternal and infant health, nurturing social and emotional relationships between parents and infants, increasing parent competency in teaching and guiding children, and increasing client access to and use of community supports and services.

Yakima's Enhanced First Steps enrolled 100 families in the program from September 2008 through December 2008. The plan for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2011 is to enroll another 33 families and maintain this service level. With increased and more certain funding, service levels can increase. Staffing for EFS includes one professional staff for each 25-client caseload, plus supervisory and clerical support time, for a total of 8.3 FTEs at the targeted 133-client case load. EFS is delivered in Yakima by a collaboration of nurses from Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, Yakima Neighborhood Health Services and Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. All of the service providers currently have waiting lists for the EFS program.

***Parents as Teachers (PAT)*** (Activity 3.1.3) is a home visiting parent education program for families with infants and preschoolers. PAT has no income or parent age restrictions for eligibility. The program is open to pregnant women and to children up to age five. It is designed to increase parents' knowledge of child development, improve their parenting skills, detect developmental delays and health issues, prevent abuse and neglect, and increase a child's school readiness and success. Program elements include:

- Regular, monthly home visits with the parent and child.
- Monthly parent and/or parent and child group meetings.
- Developmental screenings using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, along with health, vision and hearing screenings.
- Referral to community resources as appropriate.

The PAT premise is that children begin learning in their first weeks and months of life. If children have a rewarding learning experience with their first teachers (parents and childcare providers), they are more likely to bring a positive attitude and approach to learning when they reach school. PAT has a strong literacy component, as well as promoting healthy parent-child interaction, knowledge of early brain development, and age-appropriate child development.

PAT home visiting staff includes Spanish speakers; program materials are all available in English and Spanish. PAT Family Educators have at least an Associate's Degree and are trained in the PAT curriculum, *Born to Learn<sup>TM</sup>*, at the PAT national center. Additional training includes the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), and the ASQ Social-Emotional developmental screening tools. As part of the Yakima HBEL team, PAT Parent Educators receive training in Creative Curriculum and Promoting First Relationships.

The Ready by Five PAT enrollment goal for 2008 was 60 families, growing to a capacity to serve 80 families in 2009. Enrollment will be held at 80 families until June 2011, or until increased funding becomes available.

## **Strategy 4.0 Parent Engagement**

Three activities will help to get parents involved with their child's early learning. ***Promotores*** (Activity 4.1) is a community-based network of individuals who are connected to families in East Yakima, are natural leaders, and have extensive knowledge about their community. Their principal goals are to build trusting relationships with parents, and to connect them with Ready by Five programs and with other services and resources in Yakima and the state. A key function of the Promotores is to identify the basic needs of parents from the community, and refer them to

sources that can satisfy those needs, in order to reduce barriers that keep them from participating in early learning activities. The Promotores also encourage parents' self-efficacy through referrals to such opportunities as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and to Los Niños Bien Educados, a class series that helps parents navigate child-rearing in a cross-cultural context, and promote family harmony. Intensive training has been provided to the Promotores team in making referrals to connect families to the appropriate services and agencies to meet their needs; ongoing training is planned.

***Creative Families Play & Learn*** (Activity 4.2) is a series of events that offer opportunities for families to participate in age-specific activities for children from birth to age five. At these events, children and adults engage in early learning group experiences. Parents leave with a better understanding that every interaction they have with their children is an opportunity to enhance their children's development. Every event: (a) includes arts and crafts, science, and language and literacy activities to do at home that are fun and help children prepare for school; (b) gives parents a better understanding of how to engage and play with their children in ways that enhance the children's ability to learn; and (c) offers an opportunity to network with other parents and with community agencies. These events are intentionally held at elementary schools and community agencies within the target area. These settings will help the participating parents become familiar with local educational services, organizations and staff who can help their children transition into the K-12 school system.

***Parent Groups*** (Activity 4.3) provide opportunities for parents to meet together with a facilitator to address specific needs, and provide mutual support among those facing similar challenges. These groups encourage parents to become engaged in Ready by Five programs, and will increase their network of supportive parents in early learning programs and of agencies in the target area. The groups offer opportunities for parents to initiate topics of interest in the early learning and parenting fields. The groups are led by a facilitator from a community agency with expertise in the topic to be discussed. These groups will also include at least one activity to be facilitated by a participant. By taking a leadership role, the parents will increase their self-efficacy. Before the session, the participant who is to facilitate an activity will meet with a Ready by Five staff member for basic facilitation training and to cover activity specifics. Topics will relate to the programmatic goals of Ready by Five and focus on early learning development, as well as parent empowerment, per the work plan.

## **Strategy 5.0 Community Engagement**

Activities under this strategy include building the ***Ready by Five Board*** (Activity 5.1) through expanding community representation on the Board of Directors, and building community understanding of the significant role the Ready by Five Board of Directors can and will play in supporting early learning services in Yakima. As part of ***strengthening Stakeholder relationships*** (Activity 5.2), Ready by Five will work to increase the number of engaged stakeholders, and maintain good stakeholder working relationships through personal contacts by the Executive Director and the Community Liaison staff person, holding an annual Stakeholders meeting, and by developing policies and procedures for formalizing and managing the existing and new Stakeholder relationships.

Community engagement activities for strengthening *service provider relationships* (Activity 5.3) will include maintaining appropriate attendance by Ready by Five staff at Provider meetings, increasing collaboration and understanding between Ready by Five and service providers, and completion of service provider agreements between Ready by Five and the Provider Partner. Building *political and public will and engagement* (Activity 5.4) will include increasing the knowledge of parents, community members, staff and caregivers as effective facilitators and advocates of early learning, and increasing the attendance of community members at Ready by Five affiliated early learning related activities.

## Strategy 6.0 Sustainable Infrastructure

Activities for *capital fund development* (Activity 6.1) and *securing an Educare operating budget* (Activity 6.1.1) will include campaign material development, development of a prospect list, and active solicitation of funds from Federal and State sources for operating support. Actions to *formalize collaboration among service providers and stakeholders* (Activity 6.2) will include formalization of the relationships between Ready by Five and the Stakeholders and service providers by written agreements. Creating a *viable, independent but linked nonprofit Ready by Five* organization (Activity 6.3) will include establishing a more clearly defined governance system that is responsive to Ready by Five's community-representative Board, developing the capability to formulate policies and procedures based on the needs and interests of Ready by Five, and establishing an ability to directly purchase services at cost.

## Strategy 7.0 Knowledge Base

Ready by Five will contribute to knowledge about early learning through *research and evaluation* (Activity 7.1). Ready by Five will be working closely with local partners to assess the level of impact our services are having within East Yakima. Our intention is to collaboratively meet the needs of our community while building a unified knowledge base related to early learning and child development. Ready by Five will contribute to the facilitation of group forums, coordination of advisory committees and distribution of annual reports to the community. We believe by including families and community agencies in the process of evaluation, we will unify the community as advocates for our children.

Ready by Five will also work with our funders to build the research models to gather data on some of our Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement programs.

## Strategy 8.0 Cultural Awareness and Competency

Ready by Five is working to *build cultural awareness and competency* (Activity 8.1) as a thread running through all the strategies and activities that are part of our service delivery model. Ready by Five will offer activities and training opportunities to support the East Yakima community to increase their cultural awareness. By offering multicultural learning opportunities for families and the community, we hope to honor the history of our ancestors and support the unique diversity of our community. By also exposing our target area families to the broader Yakima community, Ready by Five will build cultural awareness and competency throughout the greater Yakima community.

## Indicators and Milestones

The key indicators for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2011 are described in Section V, above. Please also see the individual Activities and Milestones charts in Appendix B for the indicators and milestones of each strategy. The table below (Table 5) provides a summary of the numbers of children, parents and child care providers who will be served by the activities in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011.

Table 5. Number of People Served, by Activity, FY 2010 – 2011

	<b>Children and Parents Served</b>					<b>Child Care Providers</b>
	Pregnancy	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
<b>Community Wide</b>						
Promotores	300 Families					
<b>Parent Education and Support</b>						
Home Visitors: PAT	80 Families					
Home Visitors: EFS	133 Parents receiving Medicaid					
Home Visitors: NFP	50 1st-time mothers & partners					
Parent Clubs	90 Parents					
<b>Children's Early Learning</b>						
Educare	Planning Phase					
Creative Curriculum		(for children from age 6 wks)				40 Providers
Early Literacy Curriculum						40 Providers
Kindergarten Transition Program					250 Children	
<b>Quality Improvement</b>						
Early Learning Quality Improvement Coaches		254 Children in licensed care				26 Providers
Professional Development System/QRIS (formerly 9 & 11)						33 Providers
Provider Professional Development (formerly 12 & 13)						75 Providers
Educational Scholarships (formerly # 14)						7 Providers
Seeds to Success Quality Improvement Grants						35 Providers

## Tracking Progress

Ready by Five, where applicable, has included on the Activity and Milestone charts in Appendix B, project outcomes, indicators, milestones (including numbers of people served) and target dates. Also included are the current status or baseline measures for each outcome and the progress expected during each of the two fiscal years covered by this plan.

**Ready Yakima.** A year-end report will be produced on Ready Child characteristics, the progress of the coalition (including a list of the participants), the status of the community's "ready child" definition, details of challenges the group has met to date, and ideas for ways to promote the Ready Child skills and behaviors.

**Kindergarten Transition Program.** This program has an evaluation plan built into it. Students, teachers, parents and principals complete surveys at the end of the program. The data are analyzed and published in a year-end report. This report will be shared with the community and sent to funders.

**Child Care Quality Improvement.** Each month the Quality Improvement Director and Coordinator will complete a report that documents and tracks quality improvement activities including:

- Hours of coaching completed.
- Progress on each provider's Quality Improvement Plan.
- Number of providers enrolled in all educational and professional development programs sponsored by Ready by Five.
- Number of providers that complete a course and/or training program.
- Disbursement of Quality Improvement Grants.

The Quality Improvement Director and Coordinator will report monthly progress to the Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington. They will also evaluate monthly data internally to assess efficiency and determine adjustments that need to be made.

Monthly accomplishments in the Quality Improvement area will continue to be reported in the Executive Director's Monthly Report that is reviewed by the Ready by Five Board, the Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington.

The ETO system will also be implemented to support the production of standard and custom (special needs-based) reporting in the QI area.

**Home-Based Early Learning Programs.** All providers and programs will be collecting and recording client data and outcomes into Ready by Five's ETO system. This system will be able to provide standard and custom reports to serve the program management and the evaluation needs of the project.

**Parent Engagement and Support, and Community Outreach and Engagement.** On a monthly basis, the Director of Parent Support, the Coordinator of Parent Support and the Promotores Team Leader will complete a report that indicates parents' participation in Support Groups and Creative Families Play & Learn, together with home visits and parent engagement activities in which the Promotores have participated. This report will include:

- ***Home visits completed.*** Number of new homes visited and follow-up visits made. A log will be kept of total referrals made as well as follow-up activities that show indications that families are working to meet their basic needs. An indicator of parents' self efficacy also will be recorded, by reporting each parent who has been engaged and is currently participating in ESL, GED, Los Niños Bien Educados, computer classes, and/or any other activity that promotes self efficacy.
- ***Creative Families Play & Learn.*** The total number of parents and children participating in each one of the monthly Creative Families Play & Learn events will be recorded. This information is categorized into: (a) new families; (b) children under five; and (c) pregnant women. We also keep track of families who are following up after attending an event, and those who participate multiple times in these events.
- ***Parent Support Groups.*** The total number of parents and children participating in each one of the support groups that take place during the month is documented. This information is categorized into: (a) new families; (b) Children under five; and (c) pregnant women. We also keep track of attendance totals, families who are following up after attending an event, and those who participate multiple times in these events. An indicator of parents' self efficacy also will be recorded, by reporting each parent who has been engaged and is currently participating in ESL, GED, Los Niños Bien Educados, computer classes or any other activity that promotes self efficacy.

## VII. Organization/Capacity

### Organizational Strengths and Capacity

Ready by Five, formerly known as the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative, is a partnership project for early learning in Yakima, Washington. This project was initially developed in 2007, and implemented in 2008, by a partnership of 42 Yakima community stakeholders and principal funders, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Thrive by Five Washington and the Washington State Department of Early Learning. The project's work is focused in five census tracts of Yakima – tracts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 15 (known for the purposes of this project as East Yakima) – to get enrolled children, aged from birth to five years and their families, ready for the children's successful entry into kindergarten.

**Ready by Five's Vision.** Ready by Five has an organizational vision that children enrolled in our Ready by Five programs will arrive at kindergarten school ready. They will be ready for success in school and life.

**Ready by Five's Mission.** The mission of the early learning initiative of Ready by Five is to create a system of sustainable, high-quality early learning and support for children, families and communities.

**Ready by Five's Organizational Goals.** To carry out our mission, Ready by Five established six goals as a result of the planning work in 2007. These are:

- I. Parents are valued and equipped as the first and most important teachers of their children.
- II. Children are healthy and meet their developmental stages.
- III. Families provide a safe, supportive home, nurturing strong relationships with their children from birth.
- IV. Neighborhoods and communities support children and families with a friendly, safe environment.
- V. High-quality early learning environments are promoted in all of a child's natural learning settings.
- VI. The demonstration project created can be reasonably sustained and replicated operationally and economically.

This next two-year operational phase is an opportunity for Ready by Five to review these goals in the context of our Vision and Mission. Our Executive Committee and Board will designate a group to do this during 2009. Central to this project's operational approach is system change, because Ready by Five personnel, Board, staff, providers and increasingly the greater Yakima community, understand the transformative power of early learning experiences that do provide quality child care for children, a strong basis for success in school and life, and opportunities for family strengthening.

The founding stakeholders and Work Group participants who developed the 2007 Business Plan and provided the initial programmatic direction, recognized that improving school readiness called for the joint and ongoing action of parents, early learning providers, schools, and community and civic leaders. Achievement of meaningful and lasting transformation continues to require systemic change in the way early childhood education is organized and carried out.

**Alignment of activities.** Ready by Five's current activities are described in Sections II, III, and VI, and proposed activities for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 are delineated in detail in the Activity and Milestone charts in Appendix B. In summary, Ready by Five's vision, mission and goals, and programs and activities are in mutual alignment, and are aligned with our funders' early learning strategies, as well. Specifically, Ready by Five will provide in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, Tier I programs consisting of: (1) Home-Based Early Learning that includes Nurse Family Partnership, Enhanced First Steps and Parents as Teachers; (2) a program with child care providers for Quality Rating and Improvement Services (QRIS); and (3) our Kindergarten Transition Program. As Tier II programs, Ready by Five will provide Parent Engagement and Support, Community Outreach and Engagement, and Supports for Informal Caregivers within current budget and existing resource availability. Planning and fundraising for the establishment of Educare of East Yakima will be ongoing and outside of the budget requests for these two fiscal years.

## Organizational Management and Structure

Ready by Five has an organizational and management structure that ensures strong, collaborative program delivery among Board, staff and providers. Strategic leadership is provided by the Board of Directors, most capably led by Richard (Rick) W. Linneweh, Jr., President/CEO of Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. Mr. Linneweh is a very well-respected community leader. Administrative and programmatic operational leadership is by the Executive Director, Helen Marieskind, Dr. P.H., who has 40 years of management experience in public, private and nonprofit entities. Dr. Marieskind is closely supported and shares administrative responsibilities with the Director of Finance and Operations, Joe Payne, C.P.A. and C.M.A. Mr. Payne also has 40 years of experience in fiscal and general management in diverse organizations.

Programmatic Directors of Ready by Five are Stacy Drake, M.Ed., Director of Children's Programs, who, in addition to oversight responsibility to look at all of Ready by Five's programs through the lens of benefits to children, will also serve as the Program Director of Educare of East Yakima. Ms. Drake is closely aligned with the Yakima School District (YSD) where she serves as Director of Early Learning. Once Educare is operational, Ms. Drake will maintain this level of authority with reduced day-to-day responsibility because the YSD has hired an Assistant Director to assist her. Ms. Drake has 15 years' experience as an early childhood teacher and began her professional career, while attending college 20 years ago, as a child care director of after-school care for the San Diego Unified School District.

Cynthia Juarez, M.Ed., serves as Director of Quality Improvement. She is employed by Ready by Five for 75 percent of her time and for the remaining 25 percent, by Educational Service

District 105, where she is the Director of Early Childhood Professional Development. Ms. Juarez has worked in the early learning field for 20 years and has worked both for EPIC as a Special Services and Child Development Specialist, and for the Washington Department of Early Learning as a Licensor. While a graduate student, Ms. Juarez worked at the Experimental Education Unit at The University of Washington as a graduate student in early childhood education.

Rocio Romo-Bukhardt, B.A., M.P.H., serves as Director of Parent Support and Programs. She was trained as a nurse in Mexico where she managed a hospital-based nursing staff, and has worked with families and children for 16 years. She served in the First Steps Program at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital and for the Department of Social and Health Services in the First Steps program.

The Directors of Ready by Five are ably supported by programmatic and administrative staff. We believe that even though staffing reductions will require extended effort on the part of remaining staff, we will be able to meet service provision goals. Please see the attached organizational chart (Appendix H) and the Ready by Five Staff Diversity and Bilingual Capability Report (Appendix I).

### Transition Support from ESD 105

The ESD 105 has provided the necessary support for the start-up phase of the Ready by Five program in the areas of Information Technology (IT), Accounting, Human Resources and Grant Management during 2008. The support level required for the continued implementation efforts during the next two years is expected to continue to increase, especially in the areas of information systems (for the ETO system in particular), and in data research and evaluation, along with the expansion of the program's strategies. The reduced funding levels available to the program in the next two years and the need to provide this added increment of support have led to a further sharing of resources among our Stakeholders.

ESD 105 will continue to provide in-depth support of the Ready by Five computer network, and the Internet-based phone system now in use at the ESD 105 and integrated with the system at Ready by Five's leased office space. This service is provided on a flat monthly service charge basis, and offers multi-layer technician support availability, a complete process and procedures protocol, and tight systems security.

The furtherance of the Ready by Five programs and the expanding need for information to track the Ready by Five program, both to support day-to-day management and the long-term research goal, mean that the need for support in this area will grow at the same time that the dollars available in the next two years have been reduced. Ready by Five's plans to address this situation include a combination of more intensive use of ESD 105's IT staff, leveraging provider partners' resources, and employing outside contracted consultants only when no other qualified resources are available.

Ready by Five is also exploring the potential of meeting ETO support and research needs with existing Ready by Five staff and Stakeholders. For example, ETO support may be provided part-time by David Garcia, our Coordinator of Parent Support, whose professional training includes a degree and experience in Management Information Systems. With assignment of Parent Support to a Tier II program, we believe Mr. Garcia will be able to provide ETO support.

We will also collaborate, in conjunction with our funders, with Yakima County's Department of Community Services and Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic's Division of Planning and Development, both Stakeholders in Ready by Five, to support the development and implementation of research models.

### Prior Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Grants

The ESD 105 has received two major sets of grants jointly from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington, and one smaller grant from Thrive by Five for completion of the initial planning and the first year of plan implementation of this early learning initiative. These grants are as follows:

- **Planning Grants.** These grants were given to the Yakima community, through the ESD 105 as fiscal intermediary, to develop a 10-year plan (then referred to as the "East Yakima Early Learning Initiative," or EYELI) for improving school readiness for a majority of the children in the geographically defined East Yakima target area. The total of these grants was \$1,173,228. This total included \$750,000 from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Grant #47049, dated November 7, 2006), and \$423,228 from Thrive by Five Washington (through a grant agreement dated December 21, 2006). In addition, Thrive by Five issued an amount of \$207,656 on February 21, 2008, to ESD 105 as bridge funding for the pre-implementation support of the project.

The major outcome of this phase was the completion of a detailed business plan to meet the above objective. This plan consisted of 21 distinct strategies in three major groups. This plan was presented to a grantor review panel in October 2007.

The grantors responded to this plan with specific written direction that defined which of the proposed strategies they were willing to fund. They also assigned priorities to the fundable strategies and categorized them as either Phase One (to be emphasized during initial implementation), and Phase Two for later development.

All three of the above grants were completed on May 31, 2008.

- **Operating Grant.** Thrive by Five Washington and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation jointly provided to the Ready by Five program (formerly EYELI) through ESD 105 a total of \$4,284,940 in Grant #50497, with an initial termination date of December 31, 2008. This grant was for the purpose of supporting the Phase One

initial implementation activities. It began on May 1, 2008, and is presently ongoing under a no-cost extension with an expiration date of June 30, 2009.

This operating grant supported the start-up of extensive program activities and the creation of an independent program office located in leased space within the target service area. This office space (4,025 square feet) houses 16 Ready by Five program and administrative staff, and eight personnel from key partnering agencies. In addition, there are approximately 21 personnel (full- and part-time) providing early learning outreach who are housed at our partner agencies.

The program met almost all of its targets in the various strategy areas for 2008. These results are summarized in the December 2008 Performance Report (see Appendix J).

### Grant Management

The ESD 105 will continue to serve as the financial intermediary for Ready by Five. They will receive all grant funds and administer them according to established State of Washington financial guidelines, as they have since the start of the planning grant for this program. All financial transactions of the ESD 105 are subject to regular review by the State Auditor's staff.

Under the standardized purchasing system in use, Ready by Five's Director of Finance and Operations approves all purchase orders prior to electronic submission to the ESD 105's Fiscal Office for final approval. All proposed purchases are checked online against the adequacy of remaining funds versus budget before the purchasing commitment is made. Personal service contracts go through additional approvals compared to those specified for Purchase Orders of other goods and services; those additional requirements include the approval of the ESD 105 Superintendent. ESD 105's Board approves all final payments.

The Board of Ready by Five reviews and approves monthly reports comparing grant expenditures with the budget. The Board's approval process considers the recommendations of the Finance Committee, which meets regularly to review the financial reports in detail prior to Board submission.

## VIII. Risks

Some of the external risks described in Section V, above, may have direct impacts on the Ready by Five programs. Ready by Five will proactively address these impacts through such approaches as using consistent messages about the programs and their capacity, and making referrals to community resources. Key risks are further addressed below:

- ***HBEL program capacity*** – Families are eager to enroll in Parents as Teachers (PAT) program services, but this program is almost at capacity (80). There will be no added service capacity, except for filling vacated slots, through July 2011. Additionally, we are expecting the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and Department of Health (DOH) to respond to state budget cuts by decreasing eligibility for the First Steps program, and perhaps eliminating parts of it entirely. There is a risk of losing this portion of funding for the project. As this state funding is the basis for Enhanced First Steps (EFS), this is of concern. There are no HBEL program services available to serve more families during the next two fiscal years, except for 25 additional first-time pregnant women for NFP. Families placed on waiting lists may become very dissatisfied with Ready by Five.

To partially address this risk, families unable to enroll in PAT will be referred to Creative Families Play & Learn. While the dosage and intensity will not be equal to the experience enjoyed by enrolled families, a foundation will be laid of the principles of the PAT program. In addition, we are exploring with our PAT provider, Catholic Family & Child Service, an option within the PAT curriculum that offers group instruction in PAT activities.

Also, families unable to enter the EFS program and who desire to be placed on a wait list, will be given the option of having Promotores visits to make the family aware of any appropriate community resources. This will also give the family at least one caregiver adult who “encourages and expresses admiration and affection for the person caring for....the child” (Bronfenbrenner, 2002, p. 45).

- ***Attrition***. Child care providers who participated in the Seeds to Success Field Test will be randomly assigned to either a coaching cohort or a professional development cohort of Ready by Five. Only the coaching cohort will receive coaching services and quality improvement grants. It is possible that when this project is in full implementation, providers in the professional development cohort may decide their investments of time and effort in the professional development activities are not well spent without the coaching and grants as an added value. It is also possible that providers in the coaching cohort will find the intensity of the program, as well as the additional time and planning required, to be disruptive or overwhelming.

To mitigate the risks noted above, Thrive by Five Washington has provided guidance on key messages for communication to the public about the Seeds to Success Modified Field Test. Ready by Five will use these messages while informing and recruiting licensed child care providers to the field test. Important messages focus on the significance of the

financial support providers will receive to advance their skills and education, as well as to obtain high-quality materials and equipment for their child care businesses. Ready by Five will also highlight the importance of the field test and its contribution to the knowledge base of QRIS models on a national level. Providers will be reminded that their participation in this field test will help the Washington State early learning movement toward implementing QRIS statewide.

## IX. Evaluation and Improvement

Ready by Five appreciates the partnership with and the learning opportunities from the evaluation efforts of the Gates Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington for this project. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. has been engaged as the lead project evaluator. Ready by Five values the information gathered to date and the positive interactions we have experienced with Mathematica personnel. We deeply appreciated Diane Paulsell coming to Yakima to speak with our Board and community on the baseline findings and the excellent and collaborative presentation on the HBEL synopsis presented by Kristen Hallgren to our HBEL provider community.

Ready by Five is eager to develop additional research and evaluation models with our funders and/or Mathematica. We are both keenly interested in evaluating as yet non-evidence-based program offerings in order to shape our future work, and to contribute to the early learning field. We also want to create opportunities for our funders and for ourselves to provide innovative leadership in the early learning field through programmatic innovation that is validated by research. An example of this is the Kindergarten Transition program.

Evaluation plans for the Tier I and Tier II funded programs in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 are as follows.

**Home-Based Early Learning.** As noted above under Section III, Project Description, Mathematica has assisted the Ready by Five team by researching and developing a tool for the EFS Program to provide feedback about the team's fidelity to the EFS model for home visiting quality and content. This is a valuable contribution to Ready by Five because it allows the HBEL team to collect data on their effectiveness, thus providing validity for the program and the basis for EFS to become an evidence-based program.

**Kindergarten Transition Program.** The Kindergarten Transition Program will use the yearly evaluation of the program, including surveys from students, parents and school personnel to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Depending on findings, programmatic changes will be made. Again, the beginning data collection provides the foundation for developing an evidence-based service model.

Similarly, the EPIC/Ready by Five ECEAP Collaboration project described in Section VI will use their quarterly progress monitoring assessments of students, feedback from staff, and Kindergarten Fall DIBELS entry scores, to drive the planning for this project. Ready by Five and its partners in Ready Yakima note that the Collaboration project is a potential model for a Ready Yakima pilot.

**Child Care Quality Improvement.** Ready by Five licensed child care providers enrolled in the coaching and professional development (PD) cohorts of the Seeds to Success Modified Field Test will participate in a third-party research study implemented by Mathematica Policy Research. The field test year will involve a baseline evaluation of both cohorts using the Environmental Rating Scales, Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS), and educational

transcripts/records for each provider. Areas of child care delivery to be evaluated include: classroom and/or family child care environments; educational programming; and education level.

The post-evaluation conducted after the field test year will reassess providers in both cohorts using the same tools and approaches. Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) scores and the educational status for each provider and/or center classroom will be compared to the baseline scores to determine if improvement has been made. Baseline and post-evaluation scores and educational levels for the coaching cohort will be compared to the PD cohort to determine if coaching had an impact on the improvement of scores and provider's educational attainment.

Additionally, evaluators will determine how the Seeds to Success QRIS field test produces positive changes in providers' skills and educational levels.

**Parent engagement and support.** While Parent Support Programs were being implemented in the last quarter of 2008, evaluation tools were also being developed that focused on defining the information needed to assess and enhance our work. An MS Office Access database and evaluation tools were preliminarily developed and tested, and are being evaluated at this time. Establishing structure, completing evaluation tools and testing for validity will be a priority for Parent Support Program staff in 2009. Once the validity and functionality of this tool is determined, a proposal will be made for inclusion of this data stream into the ETO system.

## X. Budget Capacity

### Budget Discussion

Ready by Five is proposing a budget of just under \$4 million for each fiscal year in the proposal (FY 2010 and FY 2011). Please see Appendix C for the detailed budget request. The Table 6 below summarizes the two fiscal year budget proposal by strategy area, and it shows the major categories of administrative and operations support expenses. It also illustrates the percent of the total two year budget allocated to each line item. This summary shows that 69.7% of the proposed total funds will be used for the direct delivery of services and other program specific costs (before applicable indirect cost recovery). The administrative cost is 19.6% of the total, which we believe is consistent with establishing a new organization with complex management and organization issues and a planned research driven mission.

**Table 6. Two Year Budget Proposal Summary**

READY BY FIVE THRIVE/GATES FOUNDATION COMBINED OPERATING GRANT BUDGET PROPOSED FOR TWO FISCAL YEARS ENDING 6/30/11				
	FY 2010 (ENDING 6/30/10)	FY 2011 (ENDING 6/30/11)	TOTALS FOR 2 YEARS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
<b>STRATEGY EXECUTION</b>				
Community Wide - Promotores	\$ 261,924	\$ 273,688	\$ 535,613	6.7%
Parents Education and Support	1,509,266	1,481,861	2,991,127	37.4%
Children's Early Learning	173,287	178,425	351,712	4.4%
Quality Improvement (QI)	833,574	866,122	1,699,697	21.2%
<b>TOTAL STRATEGIES (BEFORE INDIRECT EXPENSE)</b>	<b>\$ 2,778,051</b>	<b>\$ 2,800,097</b>	<b>\$ 5,578,148</b>	<b>69.7%</b>
<b>INDIRECT EXPENSE - STRATEGIES</b>	<b>333,366</b>	<b>336,012</b>	<b>669,378</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>TOTAL READY BY FIVE - STRATEGY EXECUTION EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 3,111,417</b>	<b>\$ 3,136,109</b>	<b>\$ 6,247,526</b>	<b>78.1%</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION &amp; OPERATIONS SUPPORT</b>				
<b>WAGE RELATED COSTS</b>	<b>\$ 465,542</b>	<b>\$ 417,611</b>	<b>\$ 883,153</b>	<b>11.0%</b>
<b>CONTRACTOR RELATED COSTS</b>	<b>31,000</b>	<b>49,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
<b>PURCHASED SERVICES (OFFICE SPACE, PHONES, IT SUPPORT)</b>	<b>136,680</b>	<b>136,602</b>	<b>273,282</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>TRAVEL EXPENSES</b>	<b>47,500</b>	<b>44,850</b>	<b>92,350</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>SMALL EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE &amp; SUPPLIES</b>	<b>29,595</b>	<b>28,995</b>	<b>58,590</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>ALL OTHER EXPENSES</b>	<b>83,050</b>	<b>93,620</b>	<b>176,670</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION &amp; OPERATIONS SUPPORT (BEFORE CONTINGENCY &amp; INDIRECT EXPENSE)</b>	<b>\$ 793,367</b>	<b>\$ 770,678</b>	<b>\$ 1,564,045</b>	<b>19.6%</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY ALLOWANCE (NONE INCLUDED IN FY10&amp;11)</b>	-	-	-	
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION &amp; OPERATIONS SUPPORT (BEFORE INDIRECT EXPENSE)</b>	<b>\$ 793,367</b>	<b>\$ 770,678</b>	<b>\$ 1,564,045</b>	<b>19.6%</b>
<b>INDIRECT EXPENSE - ADMINISTRATION &amp; OPERATIONS SUPPORT</b>	<b>95,204</b>	<b>92,481</b>	<b>187,685</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION &amp; OPERATIONS SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$ 888,571</b>	<b>\$ 863,160</b>	<b>\$ 1,751,730</b>	<b>21.9%</b>
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 3,999,988</b>	<b>\$ 3,999,268</b>	<b>\$ 7,999,256</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Ready by Five believes that this proposed budget is a tight, but realistic and achievable target. The management of Ready by Five and the community implementing partners have worked very closely together to craft a proposal that limits service expansion to levels that will be supportable, given the \$4 million per year level of funding that Thrive by Five and the Gates Foundation directed the community to use as a maximum target in the proposal.

It is broadly recognized within the Yakima community that \$4 million per year is a very significant resource infusion, which ESD 105 and Ready by Five greatly appreciate. However, the expectation of achieving significant impact on school readiness within a sizeable neighborhood (with 3,700 children under five years of age) is also daunting. This proposed budget attempts to balance the financial constraints with both the grant obligations and the community's desire to continue positive movement toward securing this school readiness goal.

After completing the first year of start-up and implementation (as of December 31, 2008), the program's management have a much clearer picture than existed before of the actual budgetary requirements for any given operating level. The program staff completed their move into its independent office (outside of the ESD 105 space) during 2008, so the cost of space is now predictable for at least one of the next two fiscal years. All of the initial major furnishings, equipment and initial supplies stocks have also been acquired. Completion of these start-up activities removes a considerable aspect of budget uncertainty. The ongoing staff are all now in place (after the force reductions occasioned by the tightened budget constraints), so the pay scales are set, and the costs of recruiting have mostly all been absorbed (except for any unforeseen replacement hiring due to terminations).

Consideration for the budget implications has also been given to the level of commitments made in the proposal, and in setting the related milestones and target dates. In particular, the reduced staffing level has been a major factor in setting more modest goals for FY 2010 and FY 2011 than would have otherwise been the case.

Given the current economic climate, no inflation factor was included in the first fiscal year's budget. However, the proposed budget allows for a 3 percent inflation assumption in FY 2011 (on wages and other selected items). There is also a provision included for each staff position for wage step increases where applicable, based on the ESD 105's time-in-grade based pay scale.

### Plans for Securing Additional Funding

At this time, Ready by Five is not relying on additional funding to meet the goals and outcomes planned as part of the Gates Foundation and Thrive initiatives delineated in this proposal for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011.

Ready by Five is, however, seeking additional funding to provide complementary services, which our community believes are critical to a comprehensive program for getting East Yakima children ready for school and which were not included in the Gates Foundation and Thrive funding for this initiative.

## Funding Received

Behavioral health services and parent education are two examples of additional support needed. Our community is fortunate in that funding has been received by our partner agencies for these services that will allow us to complement the major support from our principal funders. We believe, and very much appreciate, that the substantial funding from the Gates Foundation and Thrive has been helpful as leverage to secure this additional, complementary and critical support.

In Spring 2008, service providers who are partners in the Yakima Ready by Five effort identified three funding opportunities that would provide support for needed services for families of young children and early learning providers. In particular these service providers were concerned about the needs identified in the initial Ready by Five Business Plan for Behavioral Health, Parenting Education classes and parent support groups. Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic Planning & Development department took the lead in organizing the community of service providers to submit three funding requests for these services; two of the three were funded. Ready by Five played a supportive role in these grant requests. None of these grant monies duplicate Gates Foundation or Thrive funded services for Ready by Five; they will complement and extend Ready by Five's capacity.

**Behavioral health services.** The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) Project LAUNCH Washington grant to the Washington State Department of Health, will help build capacity in Washington State to meet the health and behavioral health needs of young children as they become identified from their involvement with early learning efforts. Yakima County was successful in competing to be the one local service delivery site for this project. This grant will provide \$3.2 million to be administered by Yakima County Community Services over the course of five years. Implementation will begin in the next few months.

Years 1 to 3 of this grant term will focus on development of service delivery to the Ready by Five East Yakima service area, and then services will expand to all of Yakima County in Years 3 to 5.

Through Project LAUNCH Washington, the Department of Health will work with state agencies, Yakima County, and other stakeholders to expand child wellness efforts for children birth to age eight and their families. The project will address interconnected challenges facing young children and their families, including poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, as well as learning, behavioral and mental health problems.

The target population for Project LAUNCH is children from birth to age eight and their families, who face multiple risk factors. In Yakima County this project will serve 250 children and their families, and 75 child care providers, in the first year. Over the five years of the grant, 1,150 children and their families, and 375 child care providers, will be served.

A second large grant from SAMHSA will provide funds to reorganize the delivery of behavioral health services in Yakima County to a family-centered approach and will have implications for decades to come. The Yakima County Youth and Family Coalition will implement a single, integrated system of care to provide comprehensive, community-based mental health services and supports for all Yakima County youth.

**Spanish-language parenting education.** Yakima Valley farm Workers Clinic (YVFWC) has operated a Spanish-language parenting education program in Yakima County since 1992 using the Los Niños Bien Educados curriculum. This successful program has worked in cooperation with school districts and Head Start programs. It provides parenting education to address appropriate discipline and guidance, family communication, and especially to provide parents with the skills to address the damage to family dynamics that may occur when children learn English and begin to broker the larger culture for their Spanish-speaking parents.

With this three-year grant from the federal Agency for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), YVFWC will provide Spanish-language parenting education with a focus solely on the East Yakima Ready by Five neighborhood. In addition, the program will build community capacity to provide parent-led support groups, bringing the Multnomah County Health Department Capacitation Center to Yakima for parent support group facilitation trainings in each of the first two years. This program will serve 125 to 150 parents and 150 to 175 children annually.

**Family strengthening training.** Through Central Washington Mental Health and Casey Family Programs, both of which are Stakeholders in Ready by Five, opportunities for staff training in two family strengthening programs are being made available. We expect to pass the results of these trainings on through our Parent Support Groups to our families in their efforts to build self efficacy.

### Additional Fund Development Opportunities

We have been invited to apply to become a member agency in United Way of Yakima County who would like to provide some funds for operating support for Educare. We were asked to begin the process this year and have made a very modest application for funding to develop a research model in evaluating the Promotores Program, including developing a resource manual, organized around “cue questions.” As the Promotores model is being used elsewhere in Yakima and is being funded by local agencies, there is interest in evaluating effectiveness.

Ready by Five is also in the process of applying to Yakima Valley Community Foundation for furniture and equipment for our Creative Families Play & Learn room. This grant would position us well to implement a Play & Learn room if Thrive is successful with its Family, Friend & Neighbor funding requests. This furniture and equipment will eventually be moved to Educare of East Yakima when it is built.

Two other grant applications are in progress. One is to the Washington Apple Education Foundation for shelving and cupboards and for a bar code system for the Child Care Quality Improvement lending library so we can install this service in our current office space. The other is to the Yakama Nation for special Creative Families Play & Learn support.

In addition, capital gifts are being actively sought for Educare of East Yakima from State, Federal, and local and national philanthropic sources. Board and staff contribution solicitation is also underway. Discussions are progressing with EPIC and Region X for operating funds through Head Start.

We will continue to explore grants, donations in-kind and, in the near future, some special event revenues. As discussed above under the Governance section, these funds would be directly managed by the nonprofit Ready by Five and its Board.

### Budgetary Risk Factors

Ready by Five believes that the most significant risk to the budget's adequacy is ensuring that the Grantors' and the community's expectations for the feasible level of achievement remain aligned with the more limited resources available during this two-year period, especially in terms of demands on a reduced staff for special projects and reports. Ready by Five is committed to maintaining a level of communication with all concerned that should mitigate this risk.

The other significant risk is that the inflationary assumption (3% in FY 2011 only) will prove to be inadequate. In this case, Ready by Five's management believes that it will have enough advance warning to recognize the developing situation, and to propose further program realignments to the Funders to control any related impact.

## Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Name
<b>ACYF</b>	Administration on Children, Youth and Families
<b>ASQ</b>	Ages and Stages Questionnaire (assessment)
<b>ASQ-SE</b>	Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social-Emotional (assessment)
<b>BHS</b>	Behavioral Health Specialist
<b>CCF</b>	Council for Children and Families
<b>CDA</b>	Child Development Associate
<b>CES-D</b>	Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression scale (assessment)
<b>CFCS</b>	Catholic Family and Child Service
<b>CIS</b>	Caregiver Interaction Scale (assessment)
<b>CLSS</b>	Community Life Skills Scale (assessment)
<b>CONEVyT</b>	Consejo Nacional de Educacion para la Vida y el Trabajo (National Council of Education for Life and Work)
<b>CWCMH</b>	Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health
<b>DCFS</b>	Department of Children and Family Services, Washington State
<b>DEL</b>	Department of Early Learning (State of Washington)
<b>DIBELS</b>	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (assessment)
<b>DLC</b>	Difficult Life Circumstances
<b>DOH</b>	Department of Health, Washington State
<b>DSHS</b>	Department of Social and Health Services, Washington State
<b>ECEAP</b>	Early Care and Education and Assistance Program
<b>EFS</b>	Enhanced First Steps
<b>ELNA</b>	Early Learning Network Agreement
<b>EPIC</b>	Enterprise for Progress in the Community
<b>EQuIP</b>	Employee Quality Improvement Plan
<b>ERS</b>	Environment Rating Scale
<b>ESD</b>	Educational Service District
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>ETO</b>	Efforts to Outcomes
<b>EYELI</b>	East Yakima Early Learning Initiative
<b>FFN</b>	Family, Friend and Neighbor caregiver
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent
<b>GED</b>	General Education (or Equivalency) Diploma

Abbreviation	Name
<b>HBEL</b>	Home-Based Early Learning
<b>I-BEST</b>	Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training
<b>HV</b>	Home visit
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>KIDI</b>	Knowledge of Infant Development (assessment)
<b>LCH</b>	La Casa Hogar
<b>MHS</b>	Maternal Health Services
<b>MPR</b>	Mathematica Policy Research
<b>NCAFS</b>	Nurse Child Assessment Feeding Scale (assessment)
<b>NCAST</b>	Nurse Child Assessment Satellite Training
<b>NCATS</b>	Nurse Child Assessment Teaching Scale (assessment)
<b>NCCFC</b>	National Center for Communities, Families and Children
<b>NFP</b>	Nurse Family Partnership
<b>P-3</b>	Preschool through third grade
<b>PAT</b>	Parents as Teachers
<b>PD</b>	Professional development
<b>PFR</b>	Promoting First Relationships (curriculum)
<b>PIPE</b>	Partners In Parenting Education (curriculum)
<b>PHN</b>	Public Health Nurse
<b>PSI</b>	Parent Stress Index
<b>PTCC</b>	Program Team Coordinators Committee
<b>QI</b>	Quality improvement
<b>QIP</b>	Quality Improvement Plan
<b>QRIS</b>	Quality Rating and Improvement System
<b>Rb5</b>	Ready by Five
<b>RD</b>	Registered Dietician
<b>RN</b>	Registered Nurse
<b>SAMHSA</b>	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
<b>TANF</b>	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
<b>TAS-45</b>	Toddler Attachment Sort (assessment)
<b>URA</b>	Universal Risk Assessment (assessment)
<b>WIC</b>	Women, Infants and Children
<b>YNHS</b>	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
<b>YSD</b>	Yakima School District

Abbreviation	Name
YVCC	Yakima Valley Community College
YVFWC	Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
YVMH	Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital

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