

# Early Childhood Colorado Framework: Awareness and Usage Survey 2011

The survey was designed to assess the awareness and usage of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*.

## METHODOLOGY

**Process:** An electronic survey was conducted in the spring of 2011 and distributed to a large variety of Colorado early childhood stakeholders using networks across child health, mental health, early learning, and family support partners. The survey tool included open and closed-ended questions. 410 individuals responded to the survey. A baseline survey was conducted, distributed through the same networks and included some of the same questions, in spring of 2009 with 418 respondents.

**System Sectors:** The largest number of respondents categorized themselves as representing the early learning sector (32%), with 14% representing social, emotional, and mental health, 12% representing health, and 9% representing family support and parent education. 24% categorized themselves as representing comprehensive, cross system sectors.

**Focus of Work:** 62% of respondents identified their work as focused in a particular community with 22% focused statewide.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

**There is widespread and increased awareness of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*.** Nearly 80% of respondents stated they were “very aware and reference the document regularly” or were “aware” of the document compared to 65% of 2009 respondents. The largest number of respondents (n= 127) stated they first heard about the *Framework* at a local council meeting. Seventy two respondents indicated little or no awareness of the *Framework*.

**Ranking of the importance of content characteristics of the *Framework* remains consistent.** Survey respondents were asked to rank the content characteristics of the *Framework* from “most important” to “least important.” The following three characteristics, in the order listed, were ranked the highest by both 2009 and 2011 respondents:

- Recognizes the need of the whole child and family.
- Communicates the vision for comprehensive early childhood work.
- Emphasized multi-agency/organization ownership and leadership.

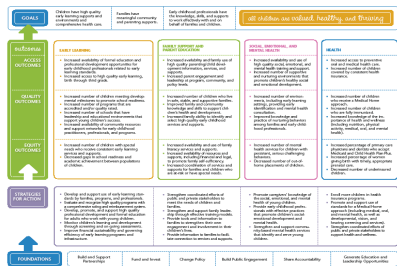
“It gets to the big picture of what we envision for all of the children in our state—we see how it all fits together for the good of the child.”

**The *Framework* is used to align collaborative work and to support strategic planning.** Over 60% of respondents reported that the *Framework* is used to align collaborative work either “a great deal” or “somewhat.” The majority of responses to an open-ended question about the use of the *Framework* indicated it is used as a guide for strategic planning and for visually presenting the comprehensive system.

“The *Framework* pulls us all together towards a common vision and goal statements in a way that no other state work has been able to do.”

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Survey confirms that the strength of the *Framework* is in the whole. The *Framework* was developed as a whole to conceptualize the vision for a comprehensive, integrated early childhood system and to show the relationship between the various *Framework* components (i.e. foundations, strategies, outcomes, system sectors, goals). The survey allowed respondents to indicate the degree to which they used the various components of the *Framework*. Responses were consistent across components to both open and closed-ended questions. Over 97% said that it was “very important” or “important” that the *Framework* provides a structure for linkages amongst the components.



*“It is everywhere — people have it framed on walls; it guides every early childhood meeting or discussion..... it IS the foundation for early childhood in Colorado.”*

The majority of respondents have shared the *Framework* with others. More than 60% have shared the *Framework* with people serving in a variety of capacities such as providers, administrators, advocates, local government and elected officials. Respondents indicated they shared the *Framework* for education and training purposes because it was important, comprehensive and user-friendly. Seventy seven percent of those who shared the *Framework* stated that they think it made a difference.

“Trying to explain what we do as a local council before the *Framework* was somewhat ambiguous. Partners better understand the full system and see connects when we use this tool.”

There is still more to do in terms of awareness building and supporting the vision outlined in the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*. Of 59 respondents who said this was the first time they’d seen the *Framework*, 81% work in local communities and 66% are providers or administrators. These respondents indicate meetings, trainings, or roundtable discussions would be valuable for learning more about the *Framework*. Additionally, numerous respondents who are aware of the *Framework* offered suggestions for further spread and integration of the *Framework* into real work.

“The *Framework* is very conceptual. It begs the question of ‘who does what.’ More concrete details would be beneficial.”

For the full 2011 survey report, go to [www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org).