



Evaluation Report

Learnings from the Parent Champions Pilot

King County Department of Community and Human Services | August 2026

DCHS Developmental Disabilities and Early Childhood Supports Division

King County's Developmental Disabilities & Early Childhood Supports Division is housed within the Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS). The division offers a range of programs and services to support children, young adults, and adults with developmental disabilities and their families. For more information, visit the division's public webpage:

<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs/human-social-services/developmental-disabilities>

Performance Measurement and Evaluation Unit

The Performance Measurement and Evaluation Unit helps partners use data to assess how department programs are implemented and their impact. Its mission is to deliver meaningful data and insights that strengthen decision-making, drive learning and improvement, and advance equitable outcomes for the communities DCHS serves. For more information, visit the unit's public webpage: <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs/about-king-county/about-dchs/data-reports/data-team>

Best Starts for Kids

Best Starts for Kids (Best Starts) is King County's community-driven initiative to support every baby born and raised in King County to be happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. Initially approved by voters in 2015 and in place since 2016, Best Starts invests in comprehensive supports for children, youth, young adults, and families and caregivers, catalyzing strong starts in early childhood, and sustaining those gains as children progress to adulthood.



King County Department of Community and Human Services
Performance Measurement and Evaluation Unit
401 5th Ave., Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98104



kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs



@KingCountyDCHS



King County



Department of Community
and Human Services

Suggested Citation

Babayan, M. (2026). Evaluation Report: Learnings from the Parent Champions Pilot. Seattle, WA: Department of Community and Human Services.

Contents

5	Background
8	Methods
12	Pilot structure: How was the pilot implemented?
18	What outcomes did participants experience because of Parent Champions?
26	What challenges did partners encounter?
29	What factors enabled success and helped overcome challenges?
31	Recommendations: What changes should be made in the next round of implementation?
36	Limitations
38	Appendices

About this evaluation report

This report, developed by the DCHS Developmental Disabilities and Early Childhood Supports Performance Measurement and Evaluation team, provides results from an evaluation of the Parent Champions Pilot.



Glossary

Community of Practice Manager: Community leaders who are contracted to support Parent Champions and facilitate community of practice gatherings.

Community partner: Organizations that are participating in the Parent Champions pilot who host Parent Champions. Also referred to as “partners” throughout this report.

Culturally and linguistically accessible: Refers to services that are provided in the preferred language of a participant by staff who have shared culture with the participant. Services may also be linguistically accessible with high-quality translation and interpretation.

Developmental screening: An evaluation completed by a parent/caregiver or professional to monitor a child’s progress with skills like talking, walking, or socializing. Developmental screenings help families identify whether a child is meeting key milestones and whether additional support may be needed.

Developmental supports: Early childhood services that support children and families with skills like talking, walking, or socializing. For example, speech, occupational, physical, or behavioral therapies.

King County Program Manager: Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) staff member who supports community partners with carrying out their contracts.

Parent Champion: A community member who has gone through the experience of raising a child with a developmental delay or disability and who is contracted to provide mentorship and support to their peers. Parent Champions share a cultural background with and speak the same language as the parents/caregivers that they support.





“Having a Parent Champion makes so much sense, right? How do you best relate to someone? [Having] someone who looks like you and has similar lived experience [helps] build trust faster with families.”

Community partner

Background

Parent Champions seeks to disrupt inequities in access to developmental screenings and services in King County.

Developmental screenings help families identify whether children are meeting milestones with skills like talking, walking, and socializing. Screenings, especially in the first three years of life, are critical for identifying potential delays or challenges and connecting families to support services. These early childhood support services like speech therapy, physical therapy, or behavioral therapy can help children and families build skills and thrive.

The Universal Developmental Screening and Promotion (UDSP) strategy¹ under the Prenatal-to-5 investment of Best Starts for Kids (Best Starts) seeks to ensure that all children in King County have access to culturally-rooted, linguistically accessible, and high-quality developmental screenings and support services.

Rates of developmental screening among young children in King County doubled between 2019 and 2023, however, disparities in screenings widened by race/ethnicity (Communities Count, 2024). Black and Asian children (specifically children in Ethiopian, Somali, and Vietnamese families) were less likely to be screened than the County average (Communities Count, 2024). There were also disparities by geography, income, and family education level (Communities Count, 2024).

A goal of UDSP funding was to disrupt these inequities, but partners were reporting to King County staff that there was continued reluctance from parents/caregivers to engage in developmental screenings due to fear of judgement and labeling, stigma about developmental differences, worry about child welfare involvement, and a gap in knowledge about early childhood services. This was consistent with findings from the 2018 - 2019 Developmental Screening and Referral Landscape Analysis (Feder et al, 2019). Fears and misconceptions about developmental screening were reported as especially common in immigrant, refugee, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) families due to factors like structural racism and non-affirming experiences navigating support systems.

1. For more information, please see: Best Starts for Kids. (n.d.). Universal Developmental Screening. <https://beststartsblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Universal-Developmental-Screening.pdf>

Parent Champions is a solution rooted in community.

A workgroup of community members with subject matter expertise and lived experience came together to propose solutions in 2022. Inspired by the Parent Champion Network in South Africa,² the workgroup recommended a peer-to-peer approach where parents/caregivers of children with developmental delays or disabilities (“Parent Champions”) support other parents/caregivers with mentorship and information sharing.

This approach is in line with research showing the importance of peer supports for caregivers of children with chronic conditions, as well as findings from the 2023 Best Starts Health Survey that parents/caregivers wanted more parenting supports (Rajanbabu, 2026). Social support can be a powerful protective factor for parents/caregivers of children with delays or disabilities who may face increased stress and not have a support network (Yang et al, 2022).

Critically, Parent Champions share culture and language with the parents/caregivers they support.

They understand what it is like to raise a child with developmental differences while navigating shame and stigma from their communities. They have gone through the process of overcoming barriers to access services that may only be available in English or are otherwise inaccessible.

Universal Developmental Screening & Promotion values:



Culturally-rooted: Founded with the cultural norms, traditions, and values of a specific community.



Family-centered: Hold families as the experts and offer services that reflect the needs, desires, and strengths of families.



Relationship-based: Trust in relationships and partnerships through mutually accountable, transparent, responsive, and customized-to-context communication and support.



Strengths-based and inclusive: Dispel myths and promote positive messages about early childhood milestones, brain development, and differences in development to reduce stigma about delays, disabilities, and mental health concerns.

2. For more information, please see: Shonaquip Social Enterprise. (n.d.). Parent Network. <https://shonaquipse.org.za/parent-champion-network/?srsltid=AfmBOorh3-OPSrSr8PHA03NLd9ZlqoMaYOLc9RvWRAX5u2e082xNPcjb>



“A lot of the time [parents are] afraid to say ‘hey, my child has Autism,’ because in our culture it’s taboo.”

Parent Champion

Five host organizations with deep connections to the communities they serve were selected to run pilots as part of the broader Request for UDSP Proposals in 2023. As part of the Parent Champions pilots, parents help share information, provide mentoring, and/or help administer developmental screenings to their peers. Given early signs of success from narrative reports and participant stories, King County opted to include another round of Parent Champions funding in the 2025 UDSP/Investing Early Request for Proposals.³

Pilot partners and focus populations served:

- **Communities of Rooted Brilliance (CRB)** provides newcomer communities with community-inspired educational opportunities that create pathways for self-determination as they weave into the fabric of their newfound home. CRB's focus populations include parents/caregivers of children five years of age or under who are English language learners.
- **East African Community Services (EACS)** provides culturally-rooted youth and family programs that empower refugee and immigrant communities across South Seattle and King County. EACS's focus population is East African families with children five years of age or under.
- **First Five Years & Beyond (FFYB)** provides comprehensive programs and educational support, empowering families, children & youth to develop lifelong skills. FFYB's focus populations include African families with young children from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Ivory Coast, South Sudan, Cameroon, Senegal, and Nigeria, as well as African American families in King County.
- **Indian American Community Services (IACS)** serves the Indian American community through programs, services, and advocacy for people of all ages and life stages. IACS's focus populations are Indian American families with young children, often including grandparents.
- **Vietnamese Family Autism Advisory Board (VFAAB)** is a coalition of families, passionate community members, and medical support service partners that seeks to be a resource to families, assisting people with navigating the care system to connect to support services and educating the community about Autism and developmental delay. VFAAB's focus population is Vietnamese families with children birth to five navigating Autism and developmental delays.

3. For more information, please see: Best Starts for Kids. (2025). Announcing 61 Investing Early RFP awardees. <https://beststartsblog.com/2025/12/23/announcing-61-investing-early-rfp-awardees/>

Methods

THEORY OF CHANGE

The evaluation team developed a theory of change to guide the evaluation approach and define intended outcomes before starting data collection activities (Figure 1).

DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation team engaged in a series of learning activities to help answer evaluation questions:

Structured interviews with participating partners helped understand specific elements of the pilot, including contracting, onboarding, and supports offered to partners. The team held five structured interviews with staff who manage Parent Champions pilots at their agencies over Microsoft Teams. A notetaker took notes to create a transcript after each call. See Appendix 1 for interview questions.

Listening sessions with parents/caregivers who worked with Parent Champions helped understand how the pilot impacted parents/caregivers and their families. Forty-five parents/caregivers participated across four listening sessions (ten to fifteen parents/caregivers per session). East African Community Services, Indian American Community Services, First Five Years and Beyond, and Vietnamese Families Autism Advisory Board opted to host and co-design listening sessions.

The evaluation team worked with partner agencies to tailor listening sessions to each community. Partners also had the opportunity to add or modify questions to support their learning goals. Two sessions were held in-language, in person, and facilitated by agency staff. Two were held in English, virtually on Zoom, and facilitated by King County staff.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This evaluation seeks to understand what elements of the pilot should be maintained and scaled, how to improve future programming, and outcomes participants experienced. Specifically:

- 1 How was the Parent Champions Pilot implemented?
- 2 What outcomes did participants experience because of Parent Champions?
- 3 What challenges did partners encounter?
- 4 What factors enabled success and helped overcome challenges?
- 5 What changes should be made in the next round of implementation?

FIGURE 1. PARENT CHAMPIONS THEORY OF CHANGE

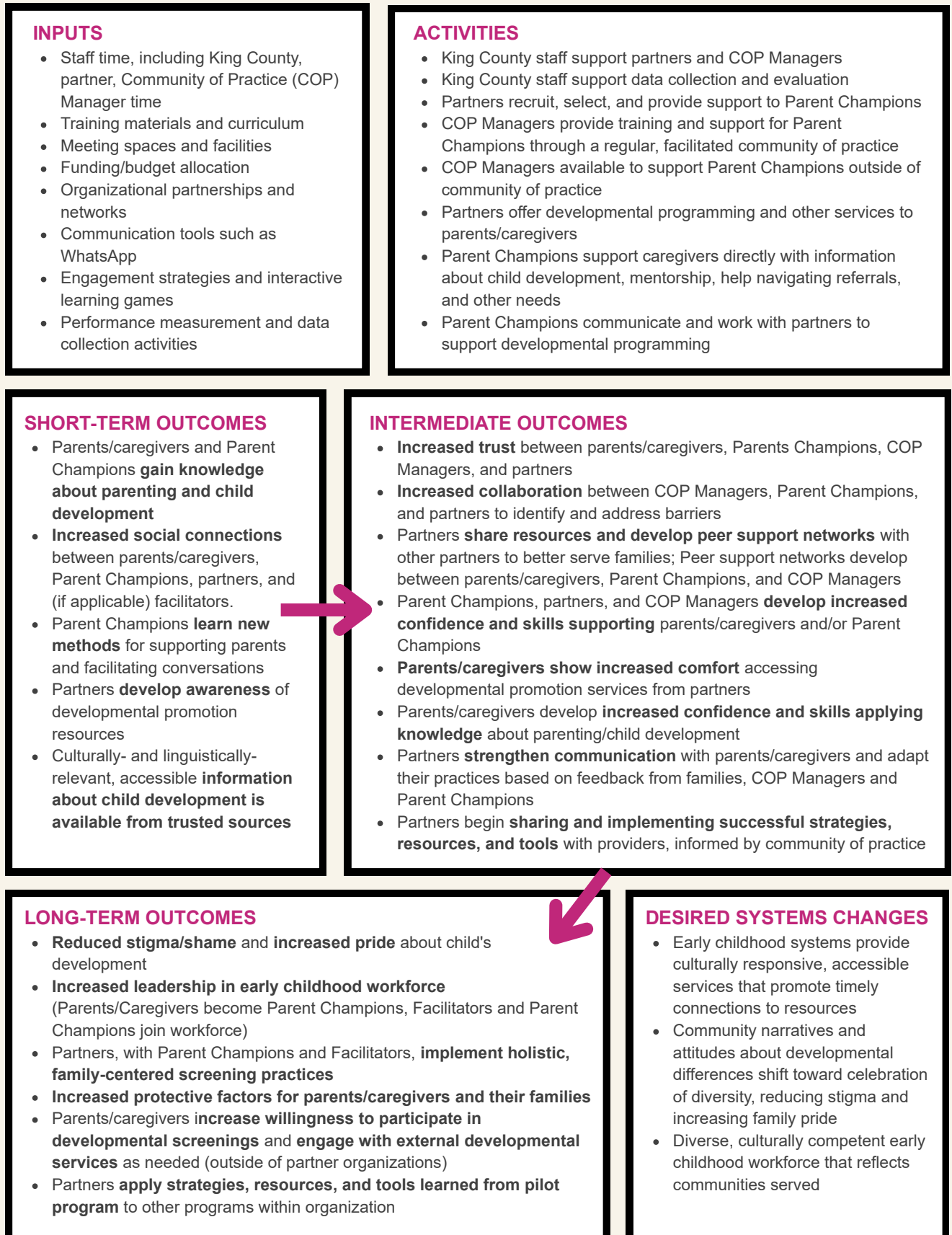


FIGURE 1. PARENT CHAMPIONS THEORY OF CHANGE (CONTINUED)

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Service landscape

- Service providers may struggle to effectively engage with diverse parent communities due to systemic racism, lack of language access, and other systemic barriers
- Parents' voices are underrepresented in service design and delivery
- There is a service gap for 3-5-year-olds with developmental concerns

Parents/Caregivers

- Parents/caregivers face barriers in accessing culturally- and linguistically- appropriate screening and developmental support services
- Families need trusted sources for having conversations about child development, screenings, and services
- Stigma around developmental differences strains mental health, and prevents engagement with screening and connections to developmental supports

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- The program has sufficient resources to achieve its aims
- Parents/caregivers with shared cultural and linguistic backgrounds and lived experience can effectively engage their peers
- Service providers have deep connections with the communities they serve and are willing to listen to and act on parent feedback
- The program structure (internal vs. external facilitation) is appropriate for the context
- The right parents/caregivers are being recruited as Champions
- Parent Champions have appropriate support to fulfill their role
- A progression from trust-building to service connection can take a year or longer – service connection not the goal of Parent Champions pilots
- Parent Champions programming celebrates differences rather than reinforcing deficit-based language
- Flexibility in program is necessary to meet diverse needs, providers are empowered to serve parents/caregivers in ways that work best for their communities

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Positive Unintended Consequences

- Creating social connections across different communities and cultural groups
- Program staff applying learning beyond Parent Champions to other programs
- Emerging support network for program staff

Challenging Unintended Consequences

- Potential reinforcement of ableist language and framing that reinforces disability as deficit

MEASUREMENT INDICATORS

- **Increased trust** between parents/caregivers, Parents Champions, COP Managers, and partners
- **Increased collaboration** between COP Managers, Parent Champions, and partners to identify and address barriers
- Partners **share resources and develop peer support networks** with other partners to better serve families; Peer support networks develop between parents/caregivers, Parent Champions, and COP Managers
- Parent Champions, partners, and COP Managers **develop increased confidence and skills supporting** parents/caregivers and/or Parent Champions
- **Parents/caregivers show increased comfort** accessing developmental promotion services from partners
- Parents/caregivers develop **increased confidence and skills applying knowledge** about parenting/child development
- Partners **strengthen communication** with parents/caregivers and adapt their practices based on feedback from families, COP Managers and Parent Champions
- Partners begin **sharing and implementing successful strategies, resources, and tools** with providers, informed by community of practice

EXTERNAL FACTORS

- Local, state, and federal policy environment
- Existing relationships between providers and communities
- Competing demands on parents' time and resources, including socioeconomic factors affecting parent participation
- Cultural factors affecting engagement
- Logistical challenges such as scheduling, transportation and geographic distribution
- Compensation restrictions affecting participant retention, including government benefit eligibility



Listening sessions were not recorded to ensure parents/caregivers felt comfortable sharing personal information. Notetakers during each session helped create transcripts. Partners received additional funding to host the sessions through Letters of Agreement to existing UDSP contracts. Parents/caregivers received \$75 gift cards for participating. See Appendix 2 for parent/caregiver listening session questions.

A listening session and survey with Parent Champions helped understand how the pilot impacted Parent Champions and where there were opportunities for improvement. Nine Parent Champions participated in the listening session. The session was held virtually over Zoom and facilitated by King County. The session was not recorded so that Parent Champions could feel comfortable sharing candidly. Notetakers helped create a transcript of the session in lieu of a recording. Parent Champions took a short survey after the listening session as well. Parent Champions received \$75 gift cards for participating. See Appendix 3 for Parent Champion listening session questions and Appendix 4 for survey questions.

Partner reports offered programmatic insights over time. As part of their regular reporting to King County, partners submitted aggregate data and narrative reports. Partners reported the number of Parent Champions engaged, number of participants reached by Parent Champions, and demographic information of participants reached and Parent Champions (age, race, preferred language, and zip code). Partners also submitted bi-annual and annual narrative reports describing program activities, successes, challenges, and outcomes (Appendices 5 and 6).

ANALYSIS

The evaluation team conducted a thematic analysis of transcripts and partner narrative reports in Dedoose using a codebook that was informed by the theory of change. The team used memos and a coding journal to track insights. Dedoose analytic tools such as the code co-occurrence chart⁴ were used to synthesize findings.

Partners, Parent Champions, and the Community of Practice Managers had an opportunity to react to and give feedback on preliminary evaluation findings at an in-person reflection session. This feedback was integrated into the final findings presented in this report.

4. A code co-occurrence chart is a qualitative research tool that can help synthesize information. It shows how often two codes or themes were used concurrently.

Pilot structure: How was the pilot implemented?

COHORT SELECTION AND ONBOARDING

Five partners were recommended for funding to implement Parent Champions pilots based on the Best Starts UDSP Request for Proposals process in 2023.⁵ The King County Program Manager onboarded community partners to Best Starts mid-2023. After initial onboarding, community partners began planning for their programs.

Community partners, not King County, defined what pilots would look like.

Instead of prescribing a rigid program model, King County allowed for community partners to define the pilots. Partners joined two workshops held in October 2023 to begin planning. Each community partner organization was paired with a Best Starts Innovations Supports Team consultant to support the planning process before workshops began. During the workshops, consultants walked partners through a series of activities that helped partners define goals, roles, and program activities, including creating a story board and/or a theory of change. Partners were also given guidance on how to recruit and onboard Parent Champions.

King County Best Starts Innovations Supports Team:

The Best Starts Innovations Supports strategy⁶ enables community experts to design, develop, and lead effective and innovative programs and interventions that serve children, from birth to age five, and their families. Innovations Supports Team (IST) members played a key role supporting community partners. IST members supported King County staff in planning workshops with community partners at the start of pilots (October 2023). The team also supported King County staff to plan a reflection session to react to and hone evaluation findings near the end of the pilot implementation period (June 2026).

Partners began recruiting and onboarding their own Parent Champions in early 2024. Throughout 2024, pilots became fully functional.

5. For more information and a full list of 2023-2026 UDSP partners, please see: Best Starts for Kids. (2023, July 31). Announcing 23 Universal Developmental Screening Awardees. <https://beststartsblog.com/2023/07/31/announcing-23-universal-developmental-screening-awardees/>

6. For more information on the Innovations Supports strategy, please see: Best Starts for Kids. (n.d.). *Innovations Supports*. <https://beststartsblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Innovation-Supports.pdf>

FIGURE 2. PILOT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE



ROLES AND ACTIVITIES

Community Partners

Staff across five partner organizations supervise Parent Champions and carry out UDSP programming with Parent Champions. With the support of the King County Program Manager, provider staff recruit, select, train, and supervise Parent Champions to serve their respective communities. Each partner hosts anywhere from one to four Parent Champions, depending on need and capacity.

Partners' UDSP programming varies, depending on the needs of each community served. Activities include:

- Holding educational events or gatherings about developmental milestones, community resources, or other topics;
- Hosting support groups for parents/caregivers;
- Offering developmental screenings;
- Providing developmental activities and playgroups for children and families;
- Making warm connections⁷ to community resources;
- Joining community events to engage in outreach and education; and
- Otherwise supporting families as needed.

7. A "warm connection" is a referral with additional navigation support to ensure families are connected to services.



ROLES AND ACTIVITIES

Parent Champions

Parent Champions are community members with lived experience raising children with developmental delays or disabilities. Parent Champions receive a stipend to act as peer mentors and provide support for other parents/caregivers of young children with developmental delays or disabilities. Critically, Parent Champions have shared language and culture with the families that they serve.

The role of Parent Champions differs with each community partner. Depending on the needs of the communities they serve, Parent Champions:

- Share their lived experiences with other parents/caregivers;
- Help educate parents/caregivers about developmental milestones and community resources;
- Administer developmental screenings;
- Support partners in planning and carrying out UDSP programming;
- Make warm connections to community resources;
- Guide parents/caregivers as they navigate feelings of shame and stigma;
- Provide transportation, interpretation, or other direct support;
- and otherwise support parents/caregivers as needed.

Partners define the expected number of hours and stipends for Parent Champions, depending on individual needs and capacity. Generally, Parent Champions are expected to spend approximately 15 hours per month on their roles.

Community of Practice Managers

Two Community of Practice Managers play a key role supporting Parent Champions and partners by facilitating a community of practice. The community of practice is a bi-monthly gathering for Parent Champions and partners to build social connections, troubleshoot issues, and learn about developmental topics or tools for engaging parents/caregivers.

It was important to staff the community of practice with community leaders rather than King County staff to avoid the power dynamics that can arise in funding relationships.

Community of Practice Managers are community leaders with professional and lived experience navigating developmental supports. Their role is to plan and facilitate community of practice gatherings, provide one on one consultation and mentorship to Parent Champions, and help communicate resources to Parent Champions via a WhatsApp group.

Community of Practice Managers center community and relationship-building. They are responsive to Parent Champion needs, planning each gathering based on feedback and real-time concerns. They took time to understand what Parent Champions wanted to learn and built a curriculum from scratch. This meant taking time to research new topics and become subject matter experts before teaching at the gatherings. They also made sure to build self-care into gatherings and hosted a retreat for Parent Champions to facilitate relationship building and wellness.

Community of Practice Managers receive a stipend from King County for their work, but do not have a separate budget to carry out programming. They are expected to spend 12 to 15 hours per month on their roles, though often spend more time implementing the work.

Originally intended as a space for Parent Champions, Community of Practice Managers realized early on that partners could benefit from gatherings as well. In response, they opened the community of practice to partner staff to participate alongside their Parent Champions.



Photo: Community of Practice Managers Ya'Vonne Hubbard (right) and Fathia Hammad (left)

Example community of practice gathering topics have included:

- Meet and greet and goal setting
- Role of Parent Champions and setting boundaries for the work
- How to have difficult conversations
- Introduction to the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)⁸
- What is Early Supports for Infants & Toddlers?
- Transitioning out of Early Supports for Infants & Toddlers
- Identifying stigma and combating it
- Brain development
- Celebrating cultural identity
- Milestones
- Seven stages of grief cycle
- The importance of play

8. The Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is a validated screening tool used to track milestones for children from birth through five and a half years old.



KING COUNTY DCHS STAFF

King County staff do not implement programming but play a key role providing and distributing Best Starts funding and supporting community partners in implementation of grants. The King County Program Manager manages contracts and supports community partners with implementing their contracts. The Evaluator supports community partners with required data collection and reporting.

PILOT SCOPE AND REACH

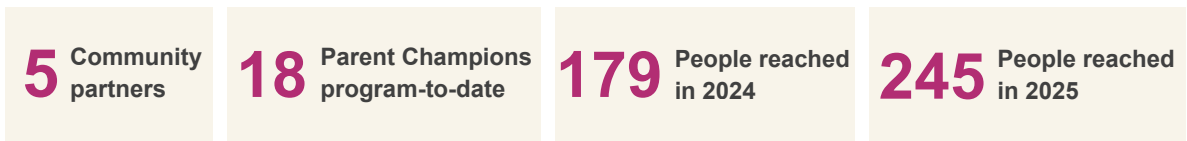
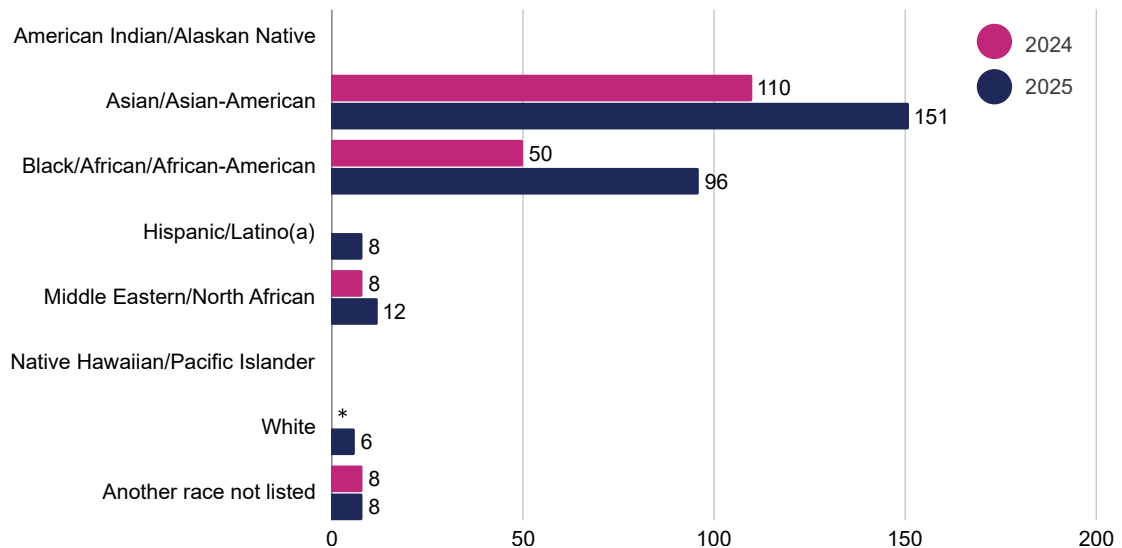


FIGURE 3. PARTICIPANTS REACHED BY PARENT CHAMPIONS

Parent Champions serve diverse communities

Number of participants reached by Parent Champions by race/ethnicity and year (includes children)



This graph shows the number of participants reached by Parent Champions by race/ethnicity and year. Many participants reached identify as Asian/Asian American or Black/African/African-American. Participants could select more than one race/ethnicity, so totals will not add up to total number served. The number of participants reached in categories with five or fewer participants is suppressed to protect privacy and is represented by an asterisk.

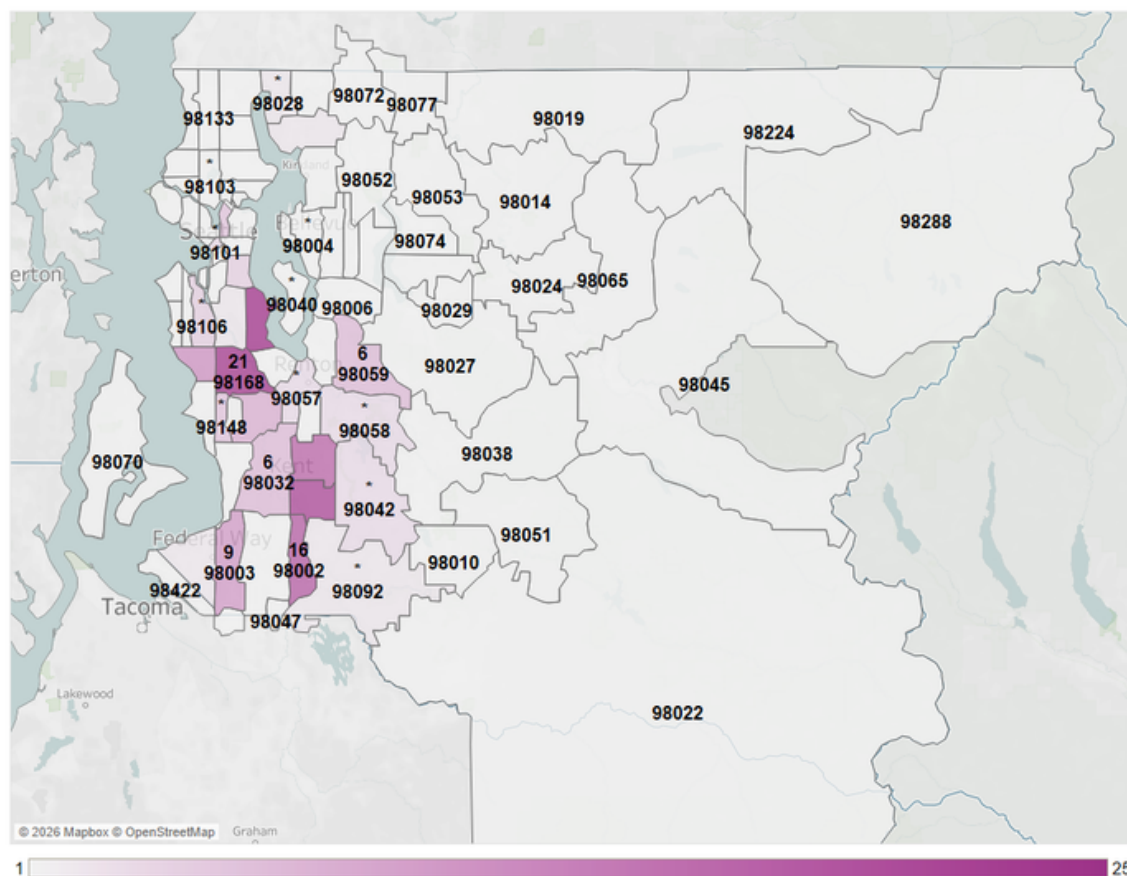
FIGURE 4. LANGUAGES REPORTED IN THE PILOT

12 languages spoken by Parent Champions and participants, including:

- Arabic
- Amharic
- Cantonese
- Dari/Farsi
- English
- French
- Hindi
- Oromo
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tamil
- Vietnamese

FIGURE 5. PARTICIPANTS REACHED BY PARENT CHAMPIONS BY ZIP CODE (2025)

Parent Champions are reaching families in South King County:



This map shows the number of participants reached by Parent Champions by zip code in 2025 (total number of participants with zip code data = 186). The most participants reached are concentrated in South King County. This is important because children in families who live in South King County are less likely to have access to developmental screening (Communities Count, 2024). The number of participants reached in zip codes with five or fewer participants is suppressed to protect privacy and is represented by an asterisk. Given a high number of participants with unknown zip codes, please interpret with caution. 2024 zip code data was also collected, but is not included in this report because most zip code totals were suppressed due to a smaller sample size.



“[The] support and everything, the screening – I think that just makes a difference in the lives of our toddlers.”

Parent/caregiver

What outcomes did participants experience because of Parent Champions?

Overall, the pilot improved wellbeing for Parent Champions, parents/caregivers, and their families in the following ways:



Increased social connections and belonging: Parent Champions helped parents/caregivers feel less alone and also found community with one another.



Increased knowledge of parenting and child development helped dispel misconceptions about screening and enabled families to better connect with their children.



Reduced shame and stigma, and increased pride about raising a child with developmental differences. Some parents/caregivers shared they were still on their journey of acceptance.



Increased confidence advocating for their children in their communities and in institutional settings like schools or doctors' offices.



Increased equitable access to developmental screenings and timely connections to services like speech, physical, and occupational therapies that help children thrive as they grow.

Additionally, Parent Champions helped community partners who were participating in the pilot build trust and reach more families. There was also evidence of community-level narrative change about developmental delays and disabilities.



“You go there and you feel at home.”

Parent/caregiver

Parent Champions helped community partners build trust and reach more families.

Parent Champion support strengthened UDSP programming. By participating in the pilot, partners strengthened their organizational capacity to support families with young children. One partner shared that “Parent Champions were able to bring in more new families than was expected of them” and that they offered more screenings than they initially set out to because of Parent Champions. One partner wrote in a narrative report: “Parents shared that working with trusted community members who understood their culture, language, and lived experiences made them feel safer, more comfortable, and more willing to engage. In response, we deepened the role of Parent Champions to include more consistent 1:1 support and follow-up with families.”

Another partner noted that “I think it’s helped our organization tremendously because it was another program that we added for child development” and that Parent Champions “helped us gain respect to get trust in the community.” Community of Practice gatherings also allowed partners to network, troubleshoot, and share successes with one another.

Parents/caregivers felt supported by and valued relationships with Parent Champions and staff.

Parent Champions provided key mentorship and support to parents/caregivers. Having a peer that had navigated similar challenges helped parents feel validated. One parent shared how her Parent Champion was able to provide guidance on whether to get a feeding tube for her child because the Parent Champion’s child also had a feeding tube. She was able to “deeply connect” with her Parent Champion and “make a confident decision” for her child because of it.

Parents/caregivers also valued program staff in addition to Parent Champions. Another parent shared that she appreciated being supported by Parent Champions and staff at every step in the process: “one thing I like is they don’t just give you information, you’re involved every step of the way.”

“

“It takes a village to raise a child. [community partner] has provided that village.”

Parent/caregiver

Parent Champions helped parents/caregivers build connections and promote belonging.

Parents/caregivers shared how thankful they were to have a community of peers who understood their culture, spoke their language, and could relate to what they were going through. One parent shared that she felt “harshly judged by the Somali community” because of her child’s delays, but that attending the group with her peers and Parent Champions made her feel “normal and accepted.”

Having a Parent Champion to share honestly with also helped ease stress. One Parent Champion shared how they were the “listening person” for other parents/caregivers, and many others agreed. Another Parent Champion who was reflecting on her impact shared: “The parents have nobody to share their feelings with sometimes, but now they have a trustworthy

person they can share their honest feelings and what they are going to through in their mind. It’s a big thing for them to have a trustworthy channel to communicate with.”

Parents/caregivers learned more about child development and parenting through UDSP programming and their Parent Champions.

Many parents and caregivers shared how they became more mindful, patient parents and more aware of resources by participating in the pilots. Parents/caregivers came away knowing more about milestones, community resources, and parenting methods, which was empowering.

A parent/caregiver shared: “I learned to let my child eat on his own. I learned to let him be and let him clear his mess. He knows how to hold the glass by himself. He can drink his own milk. This is another development I got encouraged to do after one of the classes.”

”

“I wished a group like this would exist earlier. I feel comfortable communicating and am grateful for a consistent community.”

Parent/caregiver

“I really like the focus group, the experts who come in bring so much experience and when they share this insight it’s enlightening and I’m able to take it back home and share it with my partner... We are becoming more confident as parents.”

Parent/caregiver

Parents/caregivers shared what they learned with their families and communities, increasing the reach of programs.

Parents/caregivers shared in listening sessions that they took what they learned from Parent Champions and UDSP programming back to their partners, friends, and neighbors.

Parent Champions were instrumental in helping parents/caregivers navigate feelings of shame and stigma about developmental delays and disabilities.

Many parents/caregivers felt more pride and less shame and stigma about their children’s development, though some parents/caregivers shared they were still on their journey of acceptance. Partners shared parents/caregivers came to understand that “delays are not a bad thing.”

One parent shared there was no shame because their child is “gentle” and has done nothing wrong. Another parent/caregiver shared that their Autistic child sometimes “talks and laughs in public,” and it “makes them feel sad.” But the program helped ease that sadness by providing support. The program helped the parent understand that every child – even within the same family – develops differently.

Still, some parents/caregivers noted they were not comfortable sharing about their children outside of the safe spaces provided by Parent Champions and community partners.

“I feel more comfortable sharing [about my child] because I have learned a lot of stuff that I’m able to share. How well my child is developing and the milestones they’re taking, you know? I’m not embarrassed, even if it’s something they point out, at least I’m able to let my family and friends know and so if anybody else has the same problem, I can recommend them, you know?”

Parent/caregiver



“[The] biggest challenge for me is the parent don’t want to accept what they are going through. Recently we were talking to a mom about her kid and she stopped coming to the class. Maybe she was embarrassed. We gave her a two-week break then we called her and asked her to meet with us. She accepted and she was okay with her feelings ... [We] worked on trust ... Now we are gradually letting her know the services and supporting her.”

Parent Champion

Parent Champions helped parents/caregivers overcome stigma by building trust, prioritizing relationships, and meeting parents/caregivers where they were at without judgment.

It took time and trust-building to help parents/caregivers come to terms with and see beauty in raising a child with developmental differences. Many Parent Champions shared how difficult it was to overcome stigma, but that by meeting them where they were at, they were able to move the needle.

Parent Champion support strengthened caregiver wellbeing and parent-child relationships.

Parents/caregivers were better able to support their children because of Parent Champions. Having a community of peers, learning more about parenting and navigating behavioral challenges, and other support ultimately made parents more equipped to support their families. A Parent Champion shared: “The attitudes completely changed when I first started [working with the parents] and now...they are not alone. They learn ways they can communicate with their kids. I heard a parent say, ‘I can never take my child out, because of the tantrums and all the crying and just feel embarrassed from everyone looking at me.’ To her saying, ‘I understood a way to communicate with him even though he wasn’t talking.’ ... because of all the resources she got, she’s definitely a different person.”

Parents/caregivers learned to advocate and felt more confident advocating for their child’s needs in clinical and school settings, as well as within their own families and communities.

Several parents/caregivers shared that they felt empowered to advocate for their children in the community because of UDSP programming and Parent Champion support. This was true both in formal settings such as doctors’ offices and schools, as well as within their families and communities. A community partner wrote: “Families/caregivers shared that [the Parent Champion’s] calm demeanor, relatable stories, and consistent encouragement helped them feel more confident in advocating for their children. Several parents noted they were more willing to ask questions, pursue referrals, and speak up at school meetings after connecting with her.”



“In the culture, when you have a disabled child they are scared to go outside to the public, the outside people look at them different, but I can help them and open their mind so their kid can get the help they need ... We help the kids get into early support services and not waiting until the kid gets big because then it will be too late. I’m so grateful to help them and to get them into services very early on.”

Parent Champion

Something not accounted for in the theory of change was the program’s impact on gender equity. Women in particular reported that they felt more empowered to share information with their husbands and advocate for their children’s needs. One partner shared that for Parent Champions who participated (all women at this organization), having additional money to bring back to the family as well as status in a formal role in the community helped increase their position in their families.

Parent Champions helped connect families to screenings and timely developmental supports and other resources, both internally and through external referrals.

Parent Champions helped educate and connect families to resources for their children. Many community partners shared powerful stories of parents/caregivers initially hesitant to screen their children and connect with services, but that Parent Champions helped break down barriers and make connections possible. These connections may not have been timely (or made at all) without Parent Champions helping to break down stigma, encourage families, and navigate complex systems. Parent Champions also helped families access basic needs, such as diapers and other necessities.

One community partner shared: “The Parent Champion shared her personal journey of confronting stigma and accessing early interventions, which helped her son develop resilience and thrive. Hearing this relatable story gave the participant the confidence to take the first step. With the Parent Champion’s support, the mother pursued a developmental screening for her son.”

Being a Parent Champion was personally enriching.

Parent Champions took pride in their roles supporting other families. Parent Champions were motivated to share their experiences to help others like them. Many shared how proud they were of the work they were doing. They were especially proud of being able to lift up and support families in their respective communities. One Parent Champion shared how she could not help but speak to other families even at the grocery store, encouraging them to pursue services for their children. One Parent Champion said: “We are there to help them navigate those areas and navigate their emotional situations. We help them get the services they need ...That is the happiest thing we do for our community.”

“

“I like this job, because I can help the Vietnamese families.”

Parent Champion

In helping parents/caregivers and meeting with other Parent Champions, Parent Champions also learned more about child development, built confidence advocating for their own children, and took their learnings back to their own families.

By teaching other parents and participating in community of practice gatherings, Parent Champions learned more about child development and parenting. Like the parents/caregivers they support, they were able to apply learnings to their own lives and families. Many shared that in helping empower other parents/caregivers, they felt more empowered to speak up for their own children. One Parent Champion shared “my family has gotten stronger since becoming a family champion.” Another noted, “every kid with Autism is different ... I learn a lot from the other parents.”

Another Parent Champion shared: “when we learn the material not only do we give it to the families, but also we learn from that information and personally I implement some of the advice with my family. I was supporting my family more and know more ways to advocate for my children especially with school and how to get them included. I share my learning with my friends, family, as long as I learn something new. It helped us in our personal life.”

Parent Champions built community and formed social connections with other Parent Champions and their peers.

This was made possible through the community of practice, which gave Parent Champions space to build connections and navigate challenges. Parent Champions also built strong bonds and relationships with the parents/caregivers they supported. One Parent Champion shared: “Learning from the parents because we have our different struggles we go through with our families and our kids ... There is a sense of strong community that we could all learn from.”

”

“We are not related, but we support each other.”

Parent Champion



Photo of a poster made by Community of Practice Managers during an art reflection activity. The poster shows people sitting around a table full of hearts.

FIGURE 4. PARENT CHAMPION SURVEY RESULTS

Of Parent Champions surveyed on their experience in the pilot:

- 78% “strongly agreed” they learned more about child development
- 89% “strongly agreed” they felt more comfortable talking about their own child’s development
- 78% “strongly agreed” they felt more proud and less stigma about their own child’s development
- 78% “strongly agreed” they felt more connected to their peers
- 78% “strongly agreed” they developed leadership skills
- 56% “strongly agreed” they are more interested in a career in early childhood

Nine Parent Champions participated in the survey. See Appendix 7 for full survey results.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL CHANGES

Though not explicitly measured as part of this evaluation, there was evidence of community-level changes because of Parent Champions:

Community-level narrative change:

Parents/caregivers and Parent Champions shared information back with family, friends, and other community members. Sharing information is a first step in increasing community-level knowledge about parenting and child development, as well as promoting narrative change around developmental delays and disabilities. This is especially important because the pilot served communities systemically excluded from resources and information.

Institutional changes because of advocacy and information sharing:

Partners are well-positioned to advocate for institutional changes within their communities. One partner shared how they successfully advocated for a low stimulation “special needs Eid prayer” at their local Mosque after hearing from families that they could not participate in prayer – to our knowledge, a first in Washington State. These types of community-level changes may continue as Parent Champions begins the next cohort.

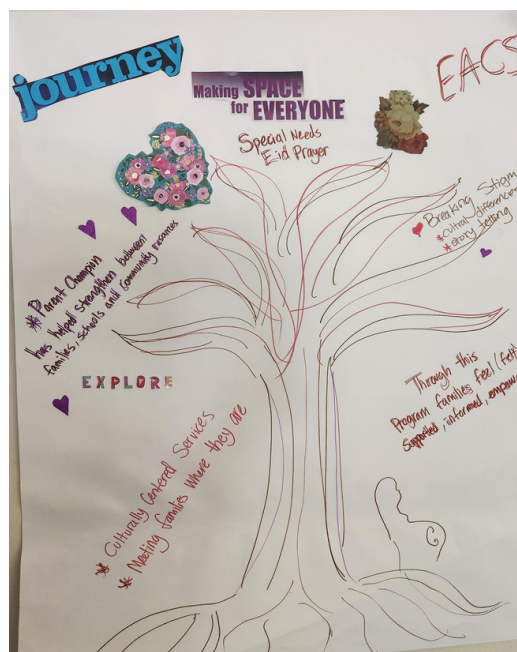


Photo of a poster made by a community partner during an art reflection activity. The poster shows a tree with a pregnant person at the trunk. Phrases around the tree include:

- “Parent Champion has helped strengthen between families, schools, and community resources.”
- “Culturally centered services, meeting families where they are.”
- “Breaking stigma, cultural differences, story telling.”
- “Special needs Eid Prayer.”
- “Making space for everyone.”



“I had the same issue – building trust in the beginning, helping the parents know that the development training is not a bad thing.”

Parent Champion

What challenges did partners encounter?

Partners experienced the following challenges:



Logistical challenges such as scheduling and lack of access to transportation made administering programming more difficult.



Stigma about developmental differences is deeply rooted and took time to overcome.



Families needed support with basic needs before they could address concerns about their child's development.



External factors such as long waitlists for services, lack of culturally- and linguistically appropriate community resources, and fear about immigration enforcement created additional barriers for families.



Parent Champions and Community of Practice Managers needed more time than they were contracted for to fulfil their roles.

Stigma and misconceptions about developmental differences are deeply rooted and took time to overcome.

When asked about challenges, Parent Champions and partners unanimously agreed that it took a lot of time to build trust with families. This was due to ableism,⁹ stigma, and shame about developmental delays and disabilities being so deeply ingrained in their communities (and all communities). Another partner shared that they had even encountered other parents making fun of children with disabilities at their organization.

9. Ableism refers to the system of practices and beliefs that privilege people without disabilities while dehumanizing and discriminating against people with disabilities. For more information, please visit the Arc of King County's resource library: Arc of King County. (n.d.). Ableism, Disability Justice Educational. <https://www.arcofkingcounty.org/resource-guide/ableism-disability-justice-educational>

“What’s challenging for me is when the parents ask me for financial resources ... They ask me for support in how to get formula, housing, diapers ... That I cannot support with. I can support with Autism.”

Parent Champion

Logistical challenges made it more difficult to carry out programming.

Community partners, Parent Champions, and Community of Practice Managers frequently cited logistical challenges as one of their main barriers. For example, finding venues to host programming, scheduling a time that worked for all parents/caregivers, and arranging transportation for parents/caregivers to participate all made it more difficult to meet with families. Parent Champions named “finding the perfect time to gather all the families” was their “biggest challenge.”

Requirements surrounding how King County-funded programs use funds also meant partners faced barriers using contract dollars to pay for venues or transportation. Though King County cannot reduce demands on parent/caregiver schedules, King County could provide more support for partners navigating other logistical challenges in a future state.

Families needed support with basic needs before they could address concerns about their child’s development.

Many partners shared families needed support with basic needs before being able to think about accessing developmental services. In addition to navigating developmental supports, families needed diapers, formula, food, housing, and other essentials. Families also shared they needed supports across the lifespan for older siblings, because a child’s needs do not go away once that child turns five. Partner staff, Community of Practice Managers, and Parent Champions offered support with basic needs or resources for older children when they could, but that support took additional time.

The scope of grant funding being limited to early childhood also meant partners had to tap into other parts of their budgets to meet family needs. Parent Champions also shared they became overwhelmed when families needed support outside of their areas of expertise.

External factors such as long waitlists, immigration enforcement, and lack of culturally- and linguistically-matched partners made it harder for families to access services.

Even when families were motivated to access services, they ran into systemic barriers such as long wait times and lack of external service providers who spoke their language. One partner described a long journey of getting a family to overcome stigma to accept services, but then ran into barriers trying to get the family connected.



“Then we finally get through the challenge of explaining that kid needs therapy, but then the services are not available and there is a long waitlist. And now we have to wait even more ... [Applied Behavior Analysis] (ABA) therapy is very hard to access – there is an equity issue there. And then on top of that there is a language barrier.”

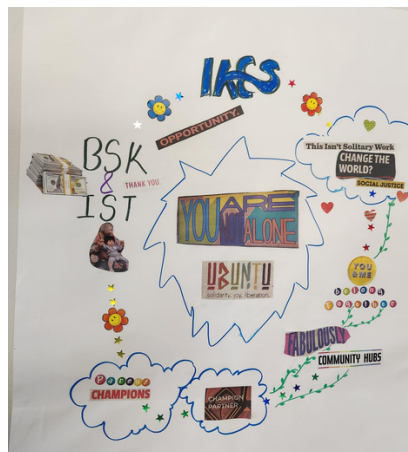
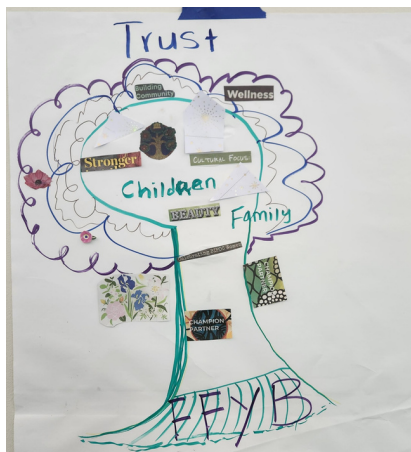
Community partner

Parent Champions and Community of Practice Managers had to manage competing demands on their time and did not have a dedicated budget to support programming.

Parent Champions and Community of Practice Managers often spent more time than they were contracted for on their roles. Both Community of Practice Managers and Parent Champions wanted to go above and beyond supporting families by providing transportation, navigation, and other supports beyond the intended roles.

One partner shared that their Parent Champion spent double the hours she was supposed to supporting families. Community of Practice Managers also shared they did not have enough time to support Parent Champions in the ways that they wanted to between driving between site visits, attending trainings, and other duties. A Community Practice Manager shared: “[This] role is part time, [but we] need more than 10 to 12 hours a month to build relationships, show up for community, develop a community of practice curriculum, provide 1:1 support, etc.”

Community of Practice Managers also noted they needed to find other jobs to support themselves because the allotted hours are minimal. They also used personal resources for programming because they did not have a dedicated budget for materials or activities with Parent Champions.



Photos of posters made by a community partners during an art reflection activity. The first poster shows a tree with the words “trust, children, and family” prominently displayed. The second shows a burst of images and words with “you are not alone” prominently displayed.

What factors enabled success and helped overcome challenges?

The following elements contributed to positive outcomes and helped overcome challenges:



Cultural and linguistic matches with Parent Champions enabled trust-building.



Facilitated community of practice gatherings were a key element of the Parent Champions pilot design.



Capacity building support and intentional planning helped set up community partners for success.



Time to build trusting relationships was essential to overcome stigma.



Flexibility to implement programs that were responsive to community needs improved engagement.

Established connections with community, cultural and linguistic matches with Parent Champions and staff enabled trust-building.

King County selected community partners that were culturally rooted, family centered, relationship-based, and strengths-based and inclusive. This selection criteria meant community partners already had deep connections in community and a shared culture and language with those they serve. Partners selected Parent Champions from within the community who also had a shared culture and language with participants. This allowed for Parent Champions to more deeply connect with parents/caregivers.

Community of Practice gatherings were a key element of the Parent Champions pilot design.

Facilitated community of practice gatherings enabled Parent Champion learning and connection. Community partners also benefited from community of practice gatherings. Parent Champions agreed that community of practice gatherings were incredibly useful and that they were “very, very satisfied” with the support they received from Community of Practice Managers.



“It feels good to work with someone who has the same experience as you. Sometimes people from America don’t really get where you are coming from. Working with someone with the same background is helpful because I can be open with them — it feels like home.”

Parent/caregiver

The community of practice made space for social connection, information and resource sharing, and troubleshooting challenges as they emerged. What’s more, the Community of Practice Managers went above and beyond to support Parent Champions – always being responsive and volunteering to help when they could. This enabled Parent Champions to better support families in their communities. A Parent Champion shared: “I appreciate [the Community of Practice Managers] to support the community. They give us a lot of very helpful information.”

Community of Practice Managers took a responsive and community-rooted approach to designing the gatherings. One Community of Practice Manager said “our goal in designing these is to create an A-HA moment.” They took time to build relationships at the outset and learn more about what Parent Champions needed before defining a curriculum.

The Community of Practice Managers were also flexible and pivoted to open the space to staff at partner organizations when they realized partners could also benefit from gatherings. Community partners also shared that being able to attend the gatherings alongside Parent Champions was helpful because they had space to connect with others and troubleshoot challenges.

Capacity building supports and intentional planning helped set up community partners for success.

Partners shared that intentional planning and support from King County staff and the Best Starts Innovations Supports Team helped them hit the ground running. The two-day planning workshops and specifically the story boarding activity helped partners imagine what pilots would look like. Templates and guides from the King County Program Manager helped partners navigate logistics like how to recruit and pay Parent Champions.

Time to build trusting relationships was essential to overcome stigma.

All partners shared that it took a lot of time – from months to years – to gain trust of parents/caregivers and work on acceptance. One partner shared that it took almost two years for one family to accept that their child may have Autism, and that they were actively working to convince the family to pursue services. Destigmatizing developmental differences takes time. The pilot structure gave partners that time.

One partner commented: “[I] would appreciate it if other [grants] would give more time to let parents warm up before diving into work. Last year this time, I’m not going to lie, didn’t feel comfortable – like how am I going to get these parents to come to our spaces? Now [we’re] comfortable because work done with other parents warming it up, but [it took] six to seven months.”

Flexibility to implement programs that were responsive to community needs improved engagement.

King County did not define what programs would look like as a funder. Partners were supported to define the types of activities offered, number of Parent Champions, the types of activities Parent Champions supported with, and other program elements. This allowed each partner to design pilots that would work best for the families they serve, as well as pivot when needed.

Many partners noted they appreciated this flexibility. For example, one partner used a cohort model to carry out programming, grouping parents/caregivers and Parent Champions by language. Some partners provided childcare when parents/caregivers had group conversations with Parent Champions, while another allowed children to be present during conversations. Many partners also used gatherings to help families meet basic needs, providing participation stipends via gift cards and food during the gatherings.

Recommendations: What changes should be made in the next round of implementation?

The following recommendations would strengthen Parent Champions and DCHS programming:



Maintain and strengthen the community of practice, capacity building supports, onboarding for Parent Champions, evaluation activities, and coordination and resource-sharing between community partners.



Increase funding and hours for Parent Champions and Community of Practice Managers.



Clarify roles between Parent Champions and provider staff, as well as Community of Practice Managers and King County Staff.



Apply the Parent Champions model to other Best Starts and DCHS strategies.



Maintain and strengthen the community of practice:

- Require attendance at community of practice gatherings for Parent Champions so all Parent Champions have access to key information and support. Communicate this expectation at the start so Parent Champions can plan with limited hours and around other responsibilities.
- Provide a schedule of meetings and topics in advance so Parent Champions can plan ahead, while still allowing room for flexibility and feedback in line with reflective practices that guide gatherings.
- Continue to offer hybrid meetings in addition to in person meetings to participation barriers.
- Ask partners to “host” meetings on a rotating basis for access to Zoom and meeting space. This can also help build buy-in among community partners and Parent Champions to participate.
- Continue to integrate wellness activities during gatherings to support wellbeing.
- Clarify when session topics are relevant for Parent Champion versus agency staff.

Provide more support for onboarding and training Parent Champions:

- Use Community of Practice gatherings as an onboarding tool for Parent Champions. Community of Practice Managers are well-positioned to support onboarding.
- Continue to provide templates and materials to support partners in recruiting and training new Parent Champions.
- Create opportunities for more experienced Parent Champions to mentor new Parent Champions and participate in onboarding.
- Encourage Parent Champions to use stipend hours to support their education and career development.

Strengthen coordination and resource-sharing between community partners:

- Increase capacity for King County Program Manager to support partners and Community of Practice Managers. King County can play a larger role coordinating between partners to reduce coordination time for Community of Practice Managers.
- Develop and maintain an accessible and up-to-date resource list for referrals and community resources, subject matter experts, and multilingual screening resources.
- Consider supplementing existing community of practice gatherings with a dedicated space for partners to share information, collaborate, and troubleshoot challenges together. This could be integrated into existing UDSP quarterly learning circles or as a breakout in existing Parent Champions community of practice gatherings, which some partners already participate in.



Increase funding and hours for Parent Champions and Community of Practice Managers:

- Increase funding for Parent Champions contracts so partners have the flexibility to offer larger stipends and more hours for Parent Champions.
- Explore the feasibility of increasing hours to make the Community of Practice Manager role part-time.
- If passed by voters, increase funding for Parent Champions in the next Best Starts for Kids levy to support this recommendation.

Clarify roles between Parent Champions and provider staff, as well as Community of Practice Managers and King County Staff:

- Ensure partners delineate roles of program staff from Parent Champions at the start of their programs. Provide scenarios and guiding questions for partners as they are planning. For example: Who does screenings? If follow up needed from a screening, who makes the referral? Who provides navigation support, if needed?
- Enforce boundaries between roles to prevent burnout and scope creep. Revisit whether roles are delineated as intended during regular provider check-ins with community partners.
- Continue to set aside time during community of practice gatherings and with partners to check in on Parent Champion workload.
- For Community of Practice Managers, also check in on roles and hours worked beyond expectations during check-ins with King County staff.

Maintain and strengthen capacity building supports:

- Continue leveraging the Best Starts Innovations Support Team to support partners in planning pilot activities and partner onboarding.
- Promote other Best Starts and DCHS capacity building opportunities¹⁰ for partners.
- Continue to offer one-on-one support from King County for partners and Community of Practice Managers.
- Continue to provide regular program calls and templates to support contract activities.

10. For more information on Capacity Building, please see: Best Starts. (n.d.). Capacity Building. <https://beststartsblog.com/capacity-building-3/>



Strengthen evaluation and measurement activities:

- Build in pilot evaluation activities into contracts and clearly communicate expectation to engage in evaluation activities.
- Add questions about Parent Champions to monthly UDSP reporting to supplement Performance Measurement and Evaluation reporting, such as hire date, end date, reason for leaving, etc.
- Consider individual-level reporting or another method to track program-to-date impact of Parent Champions.

Apply Parent Champions model to other Best Starts and DCHS strategies:

- Explore what other King County strategies may benefit from a Parent Champions model. Parent Champions helped organizations build trust and reach more families – this benefit could be expanded within UDSP, across Best Starts, and across other DCHS programs.
- Create an implementation guide for other programs to replicate the model. This implementation guide could be shared externally as well.

Next Steps

King County staff have already integrated findings from this evaluation into planning and preparation for the next Parent Champions cohort. Seven partner organizations are participating in the next cohort of Parent Champions, including four partners in the first Parent Champions cohort and three partners new to Parent Champions. This evaluation informed another Innovations Supports Team launch workshop hosted with the new cohort in July 2026.

Limitations

- Parent Champions pilots were implemented as part of UDSP grants. It was thus difficult to discern whether outcomes reported were a result of Parent Champions or UDSP programming as a whole. Despite this limitation, it was clear Parent Champions programming was additive to UDSP.
- One partner could not participate in listening sessions with parents/caregivers. This meant the evaluation did not include those parents/caregivers directly. This partner still participated in structured interviews with the Evaluator and gave feedback on their experience in the pilot.
- The evaluation did not engage with Parent Champions who had left the pilot. This may have skewed perceptions of success.
- One King County Evaluator collected and analyzed data. While the Evaluator consulted with King County team members, Community of Practice Managers, and partners, the Evaluator's bias will still be present.
- Annualized, anonymous reporting to King County did not allow the team to track the program-to-date reach of Parent Champions to understand the true scope of the pilot.
- Unintended consequence statement: A goal of Parent Champions is to destigmatize and normalize developmental differences. However, in placing an emphasis on connections to services that get children “back on track,” we worry that we are promoting an ableist idea that developmental differences need to be fixed. We believe all children and families have a right to developmental supports *and* that developmental differences should be celebrated.

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to the following teams and individuals for contributing to this evaluation and report: Samira Farah (Best Starts Data Intern) for support developing the theory of change. Community of Practice Managers Fathia Hammad and Ya'Vonne Hubbard for their wisdom and help coordinating data collection activities. King County Best Starts Innovations Supports Team members Alessandra Pollock, Caroline Gicheru, Claire Wairimu, Hannah Locke, Lizzy Menstell, Mona Mazraani, Montana Gill, Nasra Osman, and Olivia Lutz for support with data collection and planning a reflection session. King County Best Starts and Department of Community and Human Services staff Elena Romani, Jeanine Rosen, Juliette Escobar, Miguel Rodriguez-Torres, and Willa Hevly for feedback on this report. And a special thank you to community partners who participated in this pilot and shared their wisdom throughout, including Communities of Rooted Brilliance, East African Community Services, Indian American Community Services, First Five Years and Beyond, and Vietnamese Families Autism Advisory Board.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1. COMMUNITY PARTNER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I want to learn more about your experiences as a contracted provider participating in the Parent Champions pilot. Thank you for taking time to answer these questions! This feedback will be used in the evaluation and will inform how we structure the next round of Parent Champions.

1. Please describe your Parent Champions program in a few sentences.
2. Think about the onboarding and pilot setup process. What resources, support, or information was helpful? What resources, support, or information do you wish you had?
3. Think about your experience in this pilot from the start up to now. What support from King County was most helpful? What support from King County do you wish you had?
4. How has participating in this pilot impacted your organization?
5. What challenges has your organization encountered in the Parent Champions pilot?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share?
7. As part of this evaluation, I would like to hear directly from some parents/caregivers about their experiences, however, I will need your help. Would you be willing to host a parent/caregiver feedback activity as part of your regular programming?

APPENDIX 2. EXAMPLE PARENT/CAREGIVER LISTENING SESSION QUESTIONS

1. What have you liked most about working with your Parent Champion [name]?
2. How has [Parent Champion name] supported you?
3. Is there anything you wish the Universal Developmental Screening and Promotion Program or [Parent Champion name] can do differently in supporting you and your family?
4. What has changed for you and your family since participating in this program or since working with [Parent Champion name]?
5. What have you learned from the Universal Developmental Screening and Promotion Program or from working with [Parent Champion name]?
6. Since you've started attending the Universal Developmental Screening Program, do you feel like you understand your child's developmental milestones better now than before you started the program? Why or why not?
7. Since working with [Parent Champion name], do you feel less stigma and more comfortable having conversations about your child's developmental milestones with family or friends? Why or why not?
8. Do you feel more confident advocating for your child's needs (for example, asking for support from your child's pediatrician or teachers)? Why or why not?
9. What are your dreams, hopes, and goals for your future as a family and for your child?
10. Which part of today's conversation felt most important to you?
11. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with this program or with [Parent Champion name]?

APPENDIX 3. PARENT CHAMPION LISTENING SESSION QUESTIONS

1. Please take a moment to introduce yourself. What organization are you with and what you do as a Parent Champion?
2. What have you liked most about being a Parent Champion?
3. What has changed for you and your family since becoming a Parent Champion?
4. What impact do you think you have had on other parents as a Parent Champion?
5. In your time as a Parent Champion, how have you seen parents' attitudes about their children's developmental differences change?
6. Are you satisfied with the support you received from and Fathia and the monthly meetings? Why or why not?
7. Are you satisfied with the support you received from your host organization? Why or why not?
8. What was the biggest challenge you faced as a Parent Champion?
9. What would you change about the Parent Champions program?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX 4. PARENT CHAMPION SURVEY QUESTIONS

Because of my experience as a Parent Champion:

1. I have learned more about developmental screenings (like the ASQ) and child development
2. I feel more comfortable talking about my child's development
3. I feel less stigma and more proud about my child's development
4. I feel more connected to my peers
5. I have developed leadership skills
6. I am more interested in a career in early learning or child development

Response options:

- No, I strongly disagree
- No, I disagree
- I do not agree or disagree
- Yes, I agree
- Yes, I strongly agree

APPENDIX 5. BI-ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT QUESTIONS

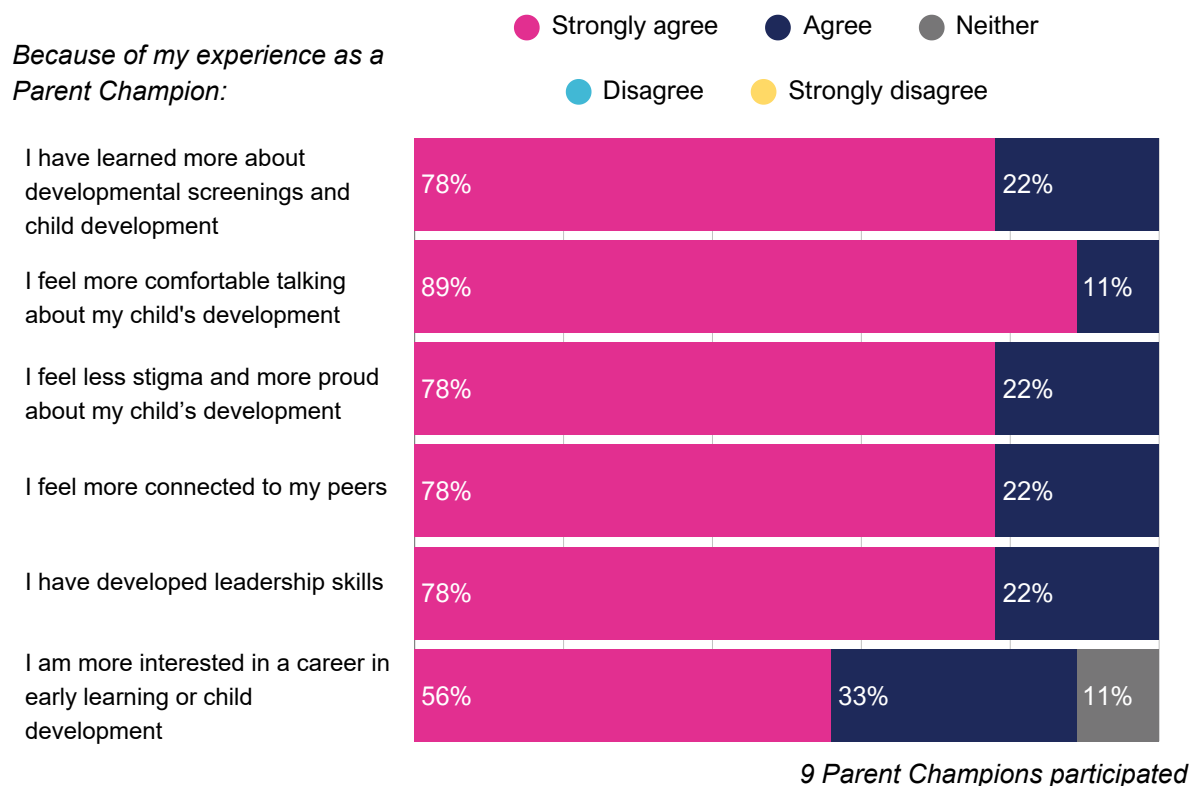
- Please describe how Parent Champions supported programming during this reporting period. For example: 1:1 mentorship, facilitation of workshops or trainings, helping families navigate referrals, etc.
- How did parents and caregivers respond to support from Parent Champions during this reporting period?
- Please describe any challenges encountered by Parent Champions during this reporting period.
- Optional: Please describe any other learnings that you would like to share with your King County Program Manager (e.g., qualitative learnings, stories, successes, challenges or barriers, etc.).

APPENDIX 6. BEST STARTS ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT QUESTIONS

Note, we opted to include Annual Narrative Report responses in this analysis only if Parent Champions was explicitly mentioned.

1. Please highlight any changes your program or organization made over the past year that impacted your focus community. If applicable, you can also note changes you have worked towards related to policies, systems, or environments. Examples: solidified a new partnership; expanded program capacity to reach new populations; drafted a policy to eliminate harmful practices; implemented a new process for linking participants with supports.
2. Please provide an example of a successful result or achievement from your program over the past year. Examples: achieving a program goal or positive feedback from a participant.
3. Please provide an example of a challenge that impacted your program results or achievements over the past year. Examples: Reasons participants are unable to meet their goals; systemic barriers impacting your program; organizational processes you want to change.
4. What story you would like to tell about your program and its impact that isn't already captured in your regular reporting to King County? We value any type of information: numbers, stories, narratives, or other forms of knowledge that your community values.

APPENDIX 7. FULL PARENT CHAMPION SURVEY RESULTS



References

- Communities Count. (n.d.). Early Developmental Screening: Rates of developmental screening among young children in King County doubled between 2019 and 2023. <https://www.communitiescount.org/developmental-screening>
- Feder, M., Jayasuriya, A., Lutz, O., Nair, M., Winters, A. (2019). Prenatal to Five Developmental Screening, Referral, and Connection to Services in King County: A Report from a Participatory Landscape Analysis. https://cdn.kingcounty.gov/-/media/king-county/depts/dchs/best-starts/documents/developmental_screening_connection_full_report.pdf?rev=4357cca4d4f545849a3d4878957e4aa2&hash=8BBD3B8AC747E1F89C72248DED3B470A
- Rajanbabu, P. (2026) Exploring Community Insights from the 2023 Best Starts for Kids Health Survey. https://cdn.kingcounty.gov/-/media/king-county/depts/dchs/best-starts/documents/bsk-reports/2023-bskhs-ppt-report_qualthemes_pr.pdf?rev=83ed458499264fdcbc35094ee787446e&hash=67631D620810B06C9AEFF884DF1095CF
- Yang J, Lin L, Gao Y, Wang W, Yuan L. (2022). Interventions and strategies to improve social support for caregivers of children with chronic diseases: An umbrella review. Front Psychiatry. 13:973012. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2022.973012.



King County Department of Community and Human Services
Performance Measurement and Evaluation Unit
401 5th Ave., Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98104



kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs



@KingCountyDCHS

