START EARLY | Consulting 5 CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS

Centering Family and Provider Voice in Systems Change

Turn Lived Experiences into Practical Action

November 10, 2026



Welcome!

CCOHVS

Stately Pine CONSULTING

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation®

READY REGIONS®

Introductions

Ann Hanson, SVP Systems Strategy, Start Early

Tamilah Richardson, Director of Consulting, Start Early

Emily Keenum & Tonya Fleenor, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

Callie Lambarth & Cara Copeland, Center for Coordination Oregon Home Visiting Systems & Stately Pine

Start Early Consulting: Champions for Early Childhood



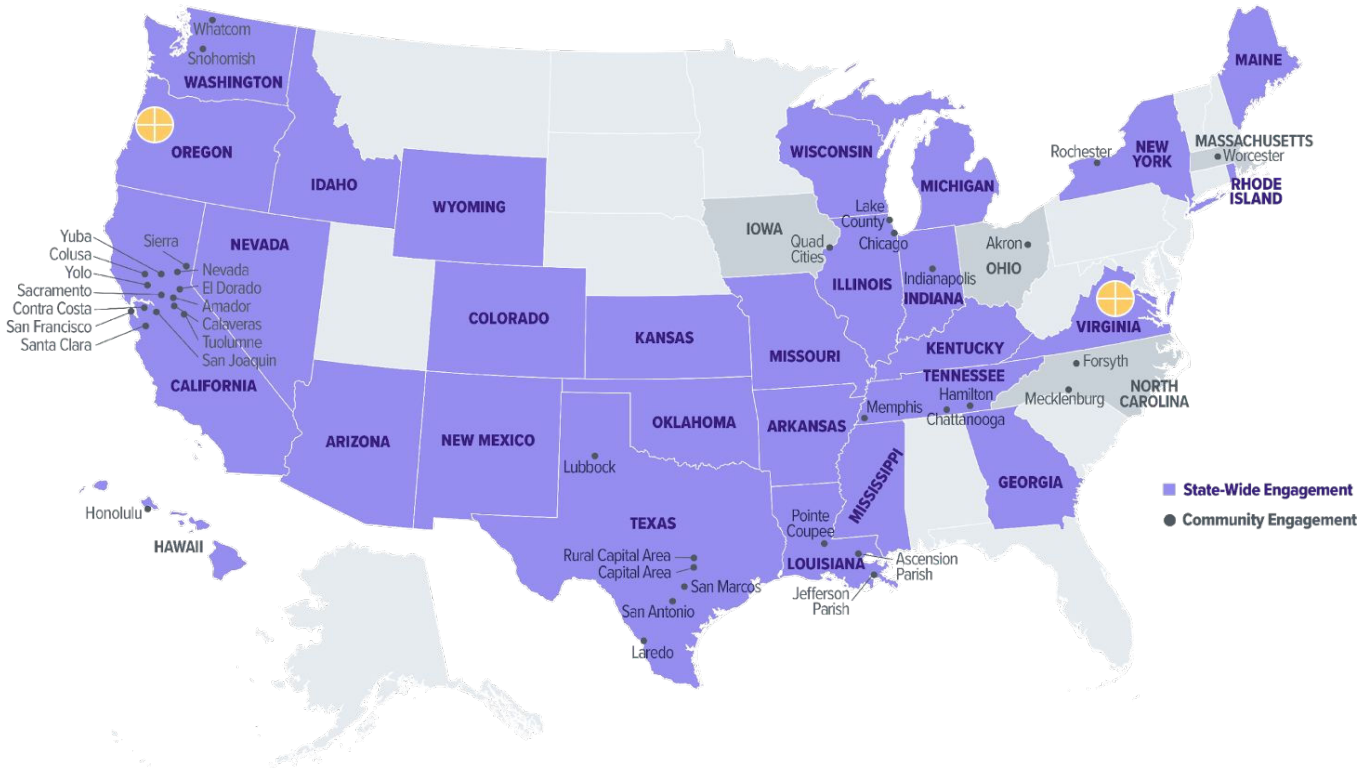
Who: Public sector leaders and advocates

How: Customized consulting with community and state leaders

Why: To transform prenatal to five systems for children and families

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Partners in Systems Change



- How do we build systems that center families and providers?
- How will the evolving federal and state landscape shape my state or community?
- How do we align ECE policy, program and funding to better serve families?

Today's Objectives

- **Learn** the importance of centering family and provider voice as we build and strengthen systems.
- **Understand** the required shifts in mental models and perspectives that help best integrate family and provider perspectives.
- **Gain** ideas, tools, and learnings to strengthen the genuine participation of families and providers in your community.

Our Time Together

1) Family and Provider Voice in Systems Change – An Overview
2) State Spotlight: Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF)
3) State Spotlight: Stately Pine & Center for Coordinating Oregon the Home Visiting Systems
4) Discussion and Q&A
5) Key Takeaways

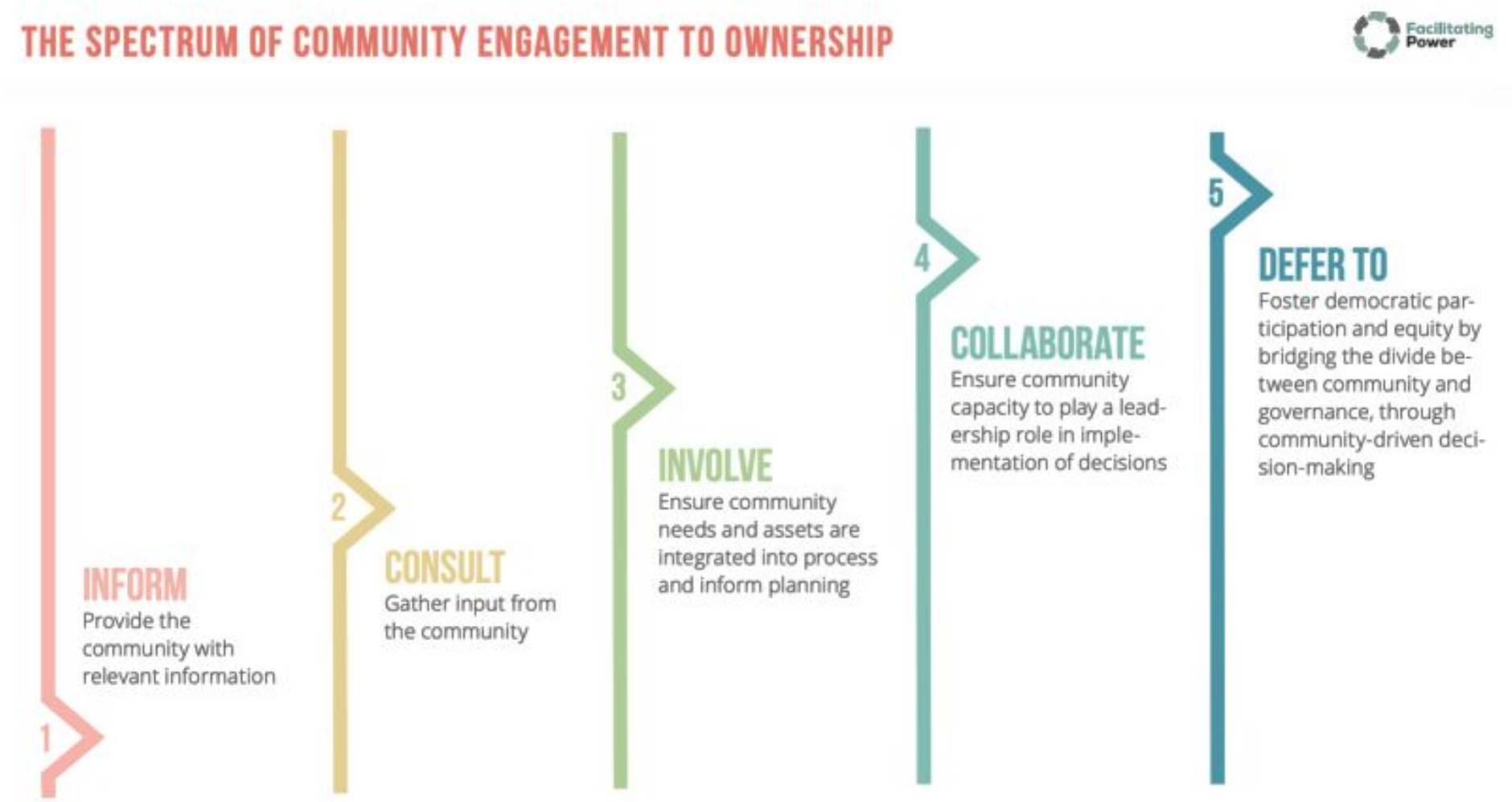
Please submit questions via the **Q&A Panel** in Zoom!

Centering Family and Provider Voice: Why Do It?

- **Identify what matters most**, pinpoint service and program gaps, and find the best solutions for young children and families
- **Dismantle systemic problems** and challenges that exclude families and providers
- **Develop and improve programs and services** to respond better to current need without overextending the system

Centering family and provider voice is both a process and an outcome.

Engagement Spectrum



Source: Community Wealth Partners, adapted from The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership, by Rosa González of Facilitating Power

Centering Family and Provider Voice: Best Practices

- Designate and fund staff to support family and provider engagement; ensure they are trained and have support
- Recruit families and providers representative of those impacted by the system
- Ensure a clear purpose, scope, roles, expectations, and decision-making power
- Compensate participants and work to reduce barriers to engagement
- Acknowledge expertise and lived experience; provide training and mentorship to new members
- Review and discuss data together. Set clear goals or priorities to focus on.

Spotlight: Virginia

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

Statewide Family Voice in Regional Systems

Emily Keenum | Senior Director, Ready Regions

Tonya Fleenor | Family Engagement Contractor, Ready Regions

READY REGIONS®

Virginia Early Childhood Foundation®

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Spotlight: Virginia's Ready Regions Network

- The **Ready Regions (RR)** network, established in Virginia code (§ 22.1-289.05) in 2022, is responsible for leading regional early childhood systems building and coordinating early childhood care and education services to prepare all children and families for success.
- **Nine lead agencies** provide regional leadership, implement responsibilities, and convene public and private partners to collaborate on strengthening Virginia's early childhood systems.
- **Public-private partnership**: Ready Regions are funded and supported by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF), in partnership with Virginia's Department of Education.



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What do Ready Regions Lead Organizations Do?

- **Build relationships** through collaborative public and private partnerships to ensure regional systems that support each region's needs, assets, and perspectives.
- **Strengthen quality** to ensure high-impact learning experiences and outcomes for children, including the local administration of VQB5, Virginia's uniform measurement and improvement system.
- **Increase access** through leadership and implementation of coordinated enrollment, workforce compensation strategies, supply building, and coordination of Mixed Delivery and other state-funded efforts to increase access to affordable, high-quality ECCE.
- **Engage families** in informing the design of early childhood systems, policies, and services.

Family Councils Informing Systems

- FCs inform **regional** planning, communications, and progress across RR responsibilities, such as serving on shared governance bodies and action teams, supporting messaging about quality care, Mixed Delivery slot allocation and eligibility, and coordinated enrollment campaigns.
- FCs inform **state** activities and communications, for example, informing the development of Virginia's new Cost Sharing initiative, VQB5 ECCE Site Quality Profile website, and the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program parent resources.
- FCs **advocate** for high quality, affordable ECCE by sharing family stories with regional and state decisionmakers about the impact of child care affordability and lack of access.

Ready Region Guidance About Family Councils

- **Maintain one full time staff person** to focus on systems-level family engagement and participate in technical assistance with other Ready Regions teams.
- **Maintain a Family Council**, representative of the region, and ensure participating families are engaged in early childhood systems design and decisions.
- **Engage families in using the VQB5 Quality Profile website**; provide data to families on ECCE quality and availability and respond to family insights and feedback.
- Complete annual **Family Council/family engagement planning** for the region.
  - Complete a self-assessment.
  - Complete and implement a regional plan for strengthening Family Councils and actively engaging families as informants for the design of systems, policies, and services.

Supporting Ready Region Family Councils

- **VECF Supports for Ready Region staff** ⇨VECF partnered with Start Early to provide:
  - Training, written guidance, and tools
  - Self-assessment and annual plan for the FCs
  - Monthly community of practice (COP), Office Hours, individual and group technical assistance (TA)
- **Ready Region Supports for Family Council members** ⇨RRs provide:
  - Stipends, flexible scheduling, meals, and child care to support participation
  - Orientation and guidance
  - Training and leadership development Advocacy 101, Telling your story/Data Storytelling, parent leadership

Family Councils In Operation

- As of January 2023, each region had a FC. **Membership** now ranges from 5-34 members with an average of 17 members.
- Every RR has developed FC **collateral**, e.g., recruitment materials, onboarding materials, etc.
- Every RR implements an **annual plan with trackable measures of success** co-created with FC members.
- FC members are **represented on RR shared governance bodies and on the state-level Virginia Promise Partnership Parent Advisory**; they share FC perspectives and bring regional and state level issues and priorities back to the FC.

Challenges

- **System Knowledge -** Building families' understanding about ECCE systems to support meaningful input has required collaboration and skill building between VECF, Ready Regions and Family Council members.
- **Supporting parent-led and mission-driven leadership -** The purpose of the Family Council is to inform ECCE systems. Ready Region staff have refined ways to communicate effectively that family leadership must align with the mission of the council.
- **Consistent retention and turnover -** All Ready Regions continually recruit members. Given the size of regions, Family Council meetings are virtual which can be less engaging. Turnover is a challenge as members' children age out.
- **Feedback loops** - Developing consistent structures with state and regional partners has been important to ensure Family Councils hear what happened with their input, whether and how it was used to influence system change.

Growth and Development of the Family Councils

- Increasing **parent leadership and ownership** of the FCs, including defined leadership roles, agenda setting, and facilitation.
- Improved **feedback loops** with scaffolding for RR and state leaders to communicate with FCs, including explaining why they are asking for family input and how it was used.
- Increasing **focus on systems design** and resources to support successful discussions.
- Increasing **family council influence evident across other RR responsibilities** and in new state initiatives

Spotlight: Oregon

Stately Pine Consulting & Center for Coordinating Oregon Home Visiting Systems (CCOHVS)

Provider Voice

Cara Copeland | Founder & Principal, Stately Pine Consulting

Callie Lambarth | Evaluation Director, CCOHVS



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Spotlight: Center for Coordinating Oregon Home Visiting Systems

- Launched in January 2024, CCOHVS functions as a home visiting program-neutral backbone organization to coordinate the system of prenatal and early childhood home visiting services.
- CCOHVS works with a wide network of state and local agencies, home visiting programs and staff, and families and community members to **ensure that all pregnant people and families have equitable access to early childhood home visiting services** that meet their unique family needs, characteristics, and strengths.
- Stately Pine Consulting brings vital facilitation capacity to financing- and advocacy-related work groups and financing- and home visiting governance-focused systems change processes through Rural Health Transformation Program funding

Learn more here!
(or ccohvs.org)



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EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING (ECHV) SYSTEMS CHANGE

A THEORY OF ACTION

VISION

All pregnant people and families with young children in Oregon have equitable access to a universally offered, coordinated system of culturally appropriate Early Childhood Home Visiting (ECHV) services that meets their unique family needs, characteristics, and strengths.

APPROACH

Build collaborative, trusting partnerships to enact meaningful, coordinated state and local systems changes that address structural and systemic inequities.

VALUES

Relationship Based

Family Led

Continuous Learning

Equity Focused

INVEST IN RESOURCES

Staff Time:
Dedicated staffing for systems work

Family Leadership:
Funding and commitment

Workforce:
Compensation, training and support

Evaluation & Data Systems:
Shared metrics, data systems, and tracking

IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

Build Leadership:
Ensure coordinated, family-driven leadership

Improve Access:
Implement coordinated, accessible intake and referral systems

Increase Resources:
Expand and align system and program resources

Change Mindsets:
Strengthen community awareness and understanding

Support Workforce:
Expand, diversify, and support the ECHV workforce

HEALTHY & SUPPORTED FAMILIES

More families see ECHV as normative.

More families can and do connect easily to ECHV services.

More partners can and do connect families to ECHV services.

More families receive culturally & linguistically responsive ECHV services that meet their needs.

Contact us at
ccohvs@pdx.edu

CCOHVS
Center for Coordination

HOME VISITING ACTION NETWORK

Implementing Strategies for Change Toward Healthy and Supported Families through Collective Action

CCOHVS
Center for Coordinating Oregon Home Visiting Systems



Building Leadership

- CCOHVS Steering Team
- Home Visiting Action Network meetings
- Home Visiting Collaborative
- Home Visiting Committee
- Home Visiting Governance Design Team
- State Family Leadership Group

Supporting Workforce

- Coordination Community of Practice
- Home Visiting Governance Design Team
- OPEC LGBTQ+ Affinity Group
- OPEC LGBTQ+ Workgroup
- Regional Home Visiting System
- Tribal Home Visiting Connections Group
- Workforce Workgroup

Changing Mindsets

- Community Awareness Workgroup
- Home Visiting Governance Design Team

Increasing Resources

- Home Visiting Governance Design Team
- Home Visiting Funding Partnership
- Rural Health Transformation Program Design Team

Improving Access

- Enrollment Data Workgroup (currently on pause)
- Home Visiting Governance Design Team

Supporting elements that support each strategy's growth:

Family leadership | Regional leadership I Feedback loops | Evaluation & data

Oregon's Structure for Partner Engagement and Structure

Build Leadership

Shifts HV systems so decisions are informed by, responsive to, and led by and for families, and their perspectives on navigating the HV system are valued.

- Family Leadership Group
- HV Committee
- CCOHVS Steering Team
- HV Collaborative
- HV Action Network
- Regional HV Coordinators Community of Practice

19 family leaders participating

Support Workforce

Promotes a strong, diverse, and well-supported HV workforce so that children and families are served by a culturally-affirming, skilled, and responsive workforce.

- Tribal HV Connections Group
- Workforce Work Group
- Project SAFE Workforce Cohort
- Regional Coordination Leadership Collaboratives
- LGBTQ2SIA+ Affinity Group

17 Tribal HV partners participating

Increase Resources

Promotes a fully funded and sustainable HV system so that more children and families can access the services they need and want in order to be supported, stable, and thriving.

- HV Funding Partnership
- Fiscal Study Work Group
- Project SAFE Financing Cohort
- Regional Coordination Leadership Collaboratives

60+ partners participating

Improve Access

Shifts HV systems toward having coordinated, accessible, and family-centered intake and referral systems so that families can access services that best meet their specific needs and strengths.

- HV Enrollment Data Work Group
- Regional Coordination Leadership Collaboratives

12 HV programs sharing data

Change Mindsets

Shifts HV systems so families, communities, funders, agencies, and program staff are aware of and understand HV so that families can utilize services that are normalized for all, and without stigma.

- Community Awareness Work Group
- Regional Coordination Leadership Collaboratives

12 partners joining new work group

Network Approach to Ensuring Provider Voice is Shaping the System

- Human networks are people plus our relationships, both in the form of individuals coming together, as well as smaller groups within the larger network, such as work groups, organizations, and projects.

- Networks naturally emerge in ways that can meet various purposes/goals, but without intentionality, this can also have unintended consequences such as concentrated power, duplicative efforts, conflicts of interest, or exclusions.

- We are working towards an inclusive, coordinated Home Visiting Action Network that inspires multiple pathways toward a common vision, and amplifies our impact.

HOME VISITING DESIGN TEAM

DESIGN TEAM:

- Cross-program and role gathering of early childhood home visiting models with the central role of redesigning our system in 4 key areas:
    - Family Access
    - Workforce
    - Data & Reporting
    - Governance & Finance
- Intentional inclusion with specific roles for agency representatives

PROVIDER VOICE INTEGRATION:

- Listening tour, prioritizing rural voices
- Survey for home visitors and families
- Tribal home visiting engagement
- Family leader participation



Early Lessons from Oregon's Provider Voice Work

SUCCESSES:

- **Great initial feedback**
- **Strong engagement**
- **Candid responses**



CHALLENGES:

- **Time and resources** to support engagement across programs and agencies.
- **Limited family participation** given the constraints on families' time
- **Making accessible system design for practitioners.**
- **Layers of complexity:** agency leaders, funders, program leaders, tribes, coalitions, legislators, lobbyists, parents, and home visitors

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Discussion and Q&A



Key Takeaways: What It Takes to Center Family and Provider Voice

- **Resources:** Fund staff and participation costs, and support them with training, regular TA, guidance and tools.
- **Build it together and keep it accountable:** Co-design with implementing partners who co-create with families and providers. Use clear mechanisms, such as annual plans and monthly reporting, to keep the work on track and supported, and ensure accountability.
- **It takes time!** Effective structures take time to develop and grow. Expect them to evolve with experience.

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Every child has equitable opportunity to reach their full potential to thrive in school and in life.

StartEarly.org/Consulting

Find startearlyorg on:

Sign up to our newsletter and connect with us

consulting@startearly.org

Webinar Resources

- **Q & A Summary:** Explore the questions captured during the webinar and the insights shared by our panelists.
- **Requested Tools & Resources:**
  - VECF Family Council Model Guide
  - Coordinating Funding Across Oregon's Home Visiting Report
- **Explore More on Centering Voice!**
  - Start Early Blog: From Insight to Action: Using Home Visitor Voice to Improve Workforce Well-Being
- **Stay Tuned:**
  - Upcoming Blog: Virginia's Ready Region Network: A Statewide Approach to Integrating Family Voice in Systems Building