



Transforming Systems to Improve Early Childhood Development in Maui County

Through a grant with the Early Childhood Developmental Health Systems (ECDHS): Evidence to Impact Center, an innovative team in **Maui County is strengthening and expanding local early childhood systems** to improve the health and well-being of young children and their families. With technical assistance and evaluation support from the ECDHS: Evidence to Impact Center, Maui is improving how local services work together so families can more easily get the care and resources they need — creating a lasting impact on young children’s healthy development.



What is an early childhood system?

The network of child- and family-serving programs and services (e.g., health care, early learning, child welfare, housing) that exist in a region to help families grow and thrive. Comprehensive, well-designed systems support families to receive the services they need, when they need them.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN MAUI

The ECDHS team concentrates its ohana-centered efforts in Maui County (islands of Maui, Moloka’i, and Lāna’i), but accomplishments are informing strategies and driving impact across Hawai’i.

Collective Infrastructure Improves Collaboration



ACTION: Maui is strengthening and expanding Kākou for Keiki, a community collaborative focused on developmental screening and helping caregivers feel supported. The team established clear decision-making processes to ensure sustainability and created public-facing platforms — including a website and blog — to share resources and information with families and partners.



IMPACT: Kākou for Keiki is streamlining critical early childhood development resources across Maui, making them more accessible to families statewide and ensuring strong connections across programs.

Community Kiosk Increases Access to Screenings



ACTION: Kākou for Keiki launched a developmental screening kiosk in Maui County's only federally qualified health center, available 2 days per week. Fifteen social workers, public health nurses, and program managers were trained to use the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) developmental screening tool at the kiosk. The kiosk is also used to promote "Kalo Boy's Adventure to Make Pono: He Huaka'i 'Ohana," a children's book created to promote families' strengths and support early learning and reading.



IMPACT: With the kiosk embedded in pediatric care and supported by trained staff, more families are completing screenings, developmental concerns are being identified earlier, and children are being connected to needed resources.

SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT



Developmental Screening Kiosk

In the kiosk's first 5 months, 38 children were screened, 31 of those children were referred for further assessment, and seven referrals were made for community resources.

Campaign Supports Development and Creates Strong Bonds



ACTION: With Ho'oikaika Partnership — a cross-sector coalition committed to preventing child abuse and neglect in Maui County — the team has promoted "Talking Is Teaching: Talk, Reading, & Sing," a public awareness campaign that helps parents and caregivers boost their children's early brain and language development through simple, everyday actions. Campaign materials are customized for Maui families, reflect local context and history, and are placed in everyday community spaces, such as buses, health clinics, and outreach events. Kākou for Keiki members also trained health care providers, home visitors, social services staff, and others to share information directly with families.



IMPACT: By adapting the campaign to community needs, Kākou for Keiki has provided more opportunities for parents and caregivers to talk, read, and sing with their children — strengthening bonds with families and supporting healthy development.

Investments Build Family Leadership and Workforce Skills



ACTION: Kākou for Keiki has strengthened the Maui early childhood system by investing in both professional and family leadership. Nine therapists were trained in Child Parent Psychotherapy to expand their skills for supporting families, and a doula mentorship program helped grow perinatal expertise for seven individuals. The team also advanced family leadership by hiring two part-time family leader coordinators and compensating family representatives for their contributions to surveys, trainings, and speaking opportunities. In addition, Kākou for Keiki established support networks, including dedicated groups for caregivers and fathers, to deepen relationships with families and identify future leaders.



IMPACT: Families have a stronger voice in shaping services, so supports better reflect their experiences. Efforts are also building a Hawai'i workforce that is more skilled, local, and responsive to Maui's needs.

The Maui ECDHS team includes health care providers, department of health leaders, early childhood education centers, economic development programs, and family support nonprofits. Visit www.earlychildhoodimpact.org for resources to support systems transformation and more information about the ECDHS: Evidence to Impact Center.



The Early Childhood Developmental Health Systems (ECDHS): Evidence to Impact Center was made possible through the support of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$4,740,000 with 0% financed from non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.