

A Toolkit for Local Health Departments  
& Early Care and Education

# Collaborating for Child Well-being



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*Collaborating for Child Well-being: A Toolkit for Local Health Departments & Early Care and Education Programs*  
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## Introduction

### The Importance of Early Childhood Health

The early years of a child's life lay the foundation for their future health, development, and well-being. Positive experiences and healthy environments during this critical period can have a profound and lasting impact, influencing everything from academic achievement to lifelong health outcomes.

However, many children face challenges that can hinder their development, such as poverty, food insecurity, lack of access to quality health care, and exposure to adverse childhood experiences. Addressing these social and structural drivers of health requires a comprehensive, community-wide approach.

### The Power of Local Health Department and Early Care and Education Partnerships

Local health departments (LHDs) and early care and education (ECE) programs are both essential pillars of community health and well-being. LHDs focus on protecting and promoting the health of populations, while ECE providers and professionals nurture the growth and development of young children. By joining forces, these sectors can leverage their unique strengths and expertise to create a more powerful and sustainable impact on the lives of children and families.



## Purpose of this Toolkit

This toolkit aims to equip LHDs and ECE providers and professionals to build and sustain successful partnerships. It provides practical guidance, tools, and resources to help you:

**Recognize** the value and potential of collaboration.

**Initiate** conversations and establish partnerships.

**Develop** clear goals, roles, and communication plans.

**Implement** evidence-based strategies to improve child health outcomes and promote family well-being.

**Sustain** your partnerships through ongoing communication, evaluation, and adaptation.

## Benefits of LHD and ECE Partnerships

Strong partnerships between LHDs and ECE providers and professionals can lead to a multitude of benefits, including:

### **Improved Health Outcomes:**

Ensuring children have access to essential immunizations, health screenings, and early intervention services, leading to healthier and happier children.

### **Enhanced Early Learning Experiences:**

Integrating health education and promotion strategies into ECE curricula, equipping children with the knowledge and skills to make healthy choices.

### **Stronger Foundations:**

Collaborating to provide comprehensive health services and support, fostering a strong foundation for children's lifelong physical, social, and emotional well-being.

### **Thriving Families:**

Connecting families to comprehensive resources and building a supportive network, empowering them to nurture their children's health and development.

### **Mutual Advantages:**

Fostering a reciprocal partnership where ECE programs gain access to health expertise and resources, while LHDs gain a direct link to children and families.

### **Strengthened Communities:**

Building a collaborative network that supports the health and development of children and families, creating a more vibrant and resilient community.



## How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit provides practical guidance and tools to support the development and sustainability of LHD-ECE partnerships. It is designed to be a flexible resource, adaptable to your specific needs and context.

Whether you're exploring new partnership opportunities or looking to enhance existing collaborations, this toolkit can help you navigate the process. You'll discover actionable steps, templates, and examples to guide you through each stage of partnership development, from assessing readiness to evaluating impact. While no two partnerships will be exactly the same, the basic models and strategies illustrated here can help you determine the best approach for your community.

This toolkit is meant to be adaptable. Select the sections and resources that best fit your unique needs. By tailoring these strategies and tools to your local situation, you can build strong, sustainable partnerships that improve the health and well-being of children and families.



## Finding Partners: Where to Start

### Collaborating for Healthy Child Development

The public health and child care systems share a common goal: fostering optimal child development and well-being. By enhancing communication and leveraging their unique strengths, these sectors can create a more significant impact on the lives of young children and their families. Collaborating together can lead to innovative solutions and a stronger foundation for community health.



## Local Health Departments: Public Health Partners

Local health departments (LHDs) are responsible for protecting and improving the health of their communities. They offer a wide range of clinical and community health services that can benefit early care and education (ECE) programs and the children and families they serve. These services focus on preventing disease, promoting healthy behaviors, and ensuring environmental health.

### Common LHD Services Relevant to ECE Partnerships

#### Clinical Services:

- Immunizations (child and adult, including COVID-19 vaccine)
- Screenings and treatment for diseases/conditions
- Maternal and child health services (e.g., prenatal/postnatal care, home visiting, health education, WIC)
- Other clinical services (e.g., oral health and behavioral/mental health)

#### Community Health Programs:

- Disease prevention and control
- Health promotion and education (e.g., nutrition and physical activity, tobacco prevention and cessation, and mental health support)
- Environmental health services (e.g., food safety education, lead inspections, and indoor air quality monitoring)

For a comprehensive list of LHD services, refer to the [2022 National Profile of Local Health Departments](#).

### Find Your LHD

Use the National Association of County and City Health Officials' (NACCHO) [Online Directory](#) to find your LHD.

## Child Care Resource and Referral Organizations: Key Facilitators

Child Care Resource and Referral organizations (CCR&Rs) are indispensable partners in fostering successful collaborations between ECE programs and LHDs. They provide expertise, resources, and support to streamline communication and build effective relationships between public health and child care providers and professionals. Understanding their unique contributions is essential for identifying potential areas for joint initiatives.

### Overview of CCR&R Services:

While the specific services offered by CCR&Rs can vary by location, the following are among the most commonly provided:

- **Supporting Families:**
  - CCR&Rs help families navigate the complex child care system, providing referrals to local child care providers, information on state licensing requirements, and assistance with accessing financial help for child care.
  - Many CCR&Rs also offer additional resources like parenting workshops, hotlines, and newsletters tailored to meet the diverse needs of families.
  
- **Supporting ECE Providers and Professionals:**
  - Most CCR&Rs provide mentoring, coaching, and technical assistance to child care programs, both in-person and virtually.
  - They often assist in developing and implementing quality improvement plans, offer business training to ensure sustainability, and distribute funding and resources such as grants and professional development materials to child care providers.
  
- **Strengthening Communities:**
  - CCR&Rs frequently partner with state agencies to respond to emergency situations, distribute essential supplies, and facilitate the equitable distribution of funding.
  - They commonly engage in data collection and analysis to identify child care needs and trends, informing decision-making at the state and local levels.

### Building Partnerships with CCR&Rs:

ECE programs and LHDs looking to build partnerships should consider the benefits of starting with their local CCR&R. Key advantages include:

- **Partnership Expertise:** Many CCR&R organizations have experience facilitating connections between ECE programs and LHDs. They can provide guidance on identifying potential partners and navigating the initial stages of collaboration.

- **Community Knowledge:** CCR&Rs maintain a comprehensive database of licensed ECE programs and can connect you with programs that align with your partnership goals. They may also have existing partnerships with LHDs or child care health consultants and other key contacts working on issues relevant to ECE programs.

For more information on CCR&Rs and the services they provide, visit [Child Care Aware® of America](#).

**Find Your  
CCR&R**

Use Child Care Aware® of America's **CCR&R Directory** by entering your zip code.

## Child Care Health Consultants: Health Experts for ECE

Child Care Health Consultants (CCHCs) are health professionals specializing in child and community health. They play a crucial role in promoting healthy and safe environments within ECE settings.

### Key Contributions of CCHCs:

#### Health Expertise and Training:

- CCHCs provide training and technical assistance to ECE staff on health topics such as hygiene, nutrition, safety, and disease prevention.
- They assist in the development and implementation of health and safety policies within ECE settings.

#### Program Support:

- CCHCs help ECE programs implement best practices and meet health and safety standards, which is essential for maintaining high-quality care environments.
- They offer guidance on conducting developmental screenings and linking families to appropriate health services.

#### Building Capacity:

- CCHCs work to strengthen the overall health knowledge and skills of ECE staff, ensuring that they are well-equipped to promote and maintain healthy environments for children.

### Find a CCHC

Contact your **CCR&R** or **LHD**\*.

Learn more about CCHCs by visiting the Administration on Children and Families **Child Care Health Consultants page**.

\*Note: Not all states have CCHCs.

## ECE Programs: More Than Child Care

ECE programs encompass a wide range of settings, including child care centers, family child care homes, Head Start programs, and pre-kindergarten classrooms. In addition to providing quality care and education, ECE programs also contribute to children's health and well-being through:

### Health and Developmental Support in ECE Programs:

#### Health Education:

- ECE programs integrate age-appropriate information about hygiene, nutrition, and healthy habits into the curriculum, helping to instill lifelong healthy behaviors in children.

#### Developmental Screenings:

- ECE programs conduct regular developmental screenings to identify potential developmental delays early and refer children to appropriate services, ensuring they receive the support they need.

#### Family Engagement:

- ECE programs actively engage with families on health topics, providing them with valuable information on community resources and services, and supporting them in creating healthy home environments.

## Resources for Planning and Assessing Readiness

### Logic Model: Your Partnership Roadmap

Think of a logic model as your partnership's roadmap. It's a visual guide that connects what you have (your resources or inputs), what you'll do (your activities or outputs), and the positive changes you want to create (outcomes). This helps ensure every step you take is aligned with your overall goals.

### Understanding the Key Components

#### 1. Inputs: Fueling Your Efforts

These are the resources that power your partnership. Just like planning a family meal requires ingredients, time, and cooking skills, your LHD-ECE partnership needs:

- **Staff:** Dedicated LHD and ECE professionals with expertise in child health, development, and early learning.
- **Funding:** Financial resources to support joint initiatives and programs.
- **Data and Information:** Access to relevant health and education data to inform decision-making.
- **Community Relationships:** Strong connections with families, schools, and other community organizations.

#### 2. Outputs: Taking Action

These are the activities and products that result from your inputs. Like sending out job applications when searching for a new role, your LHD-ECE partnership's outputs could include:

- **Joint Trainings:** Providing professional development opportunities for LHD and ECE staff on topics like child health, nutrition, and developmental screenings.
- **Health and Wellness Programs:** Implementing initiatives that promote healthy behaviors and prevent chronic diseases in young children.
- **Family Engagement Activities:** Creating resources and events that empower families to support their children's health and development.

#### 3. Outcomes: Making a Difference

These are the positive changes you aim to achieve. Similar to landing a fulfilling job after a search, your LHD-ECE partnership outcomes can be:

- **Short-Term:** Increased collaboration and communication between LHD and ECE staff, leading to improved coordination of services.

- Medium-Term: Enhanced health and developmental screenings for children in ECE settings, resulting in earlier identification and intervention for potential issues.
- Long-Term: Improved overall health and well-being of children, leading to better school readiness and long-term success.

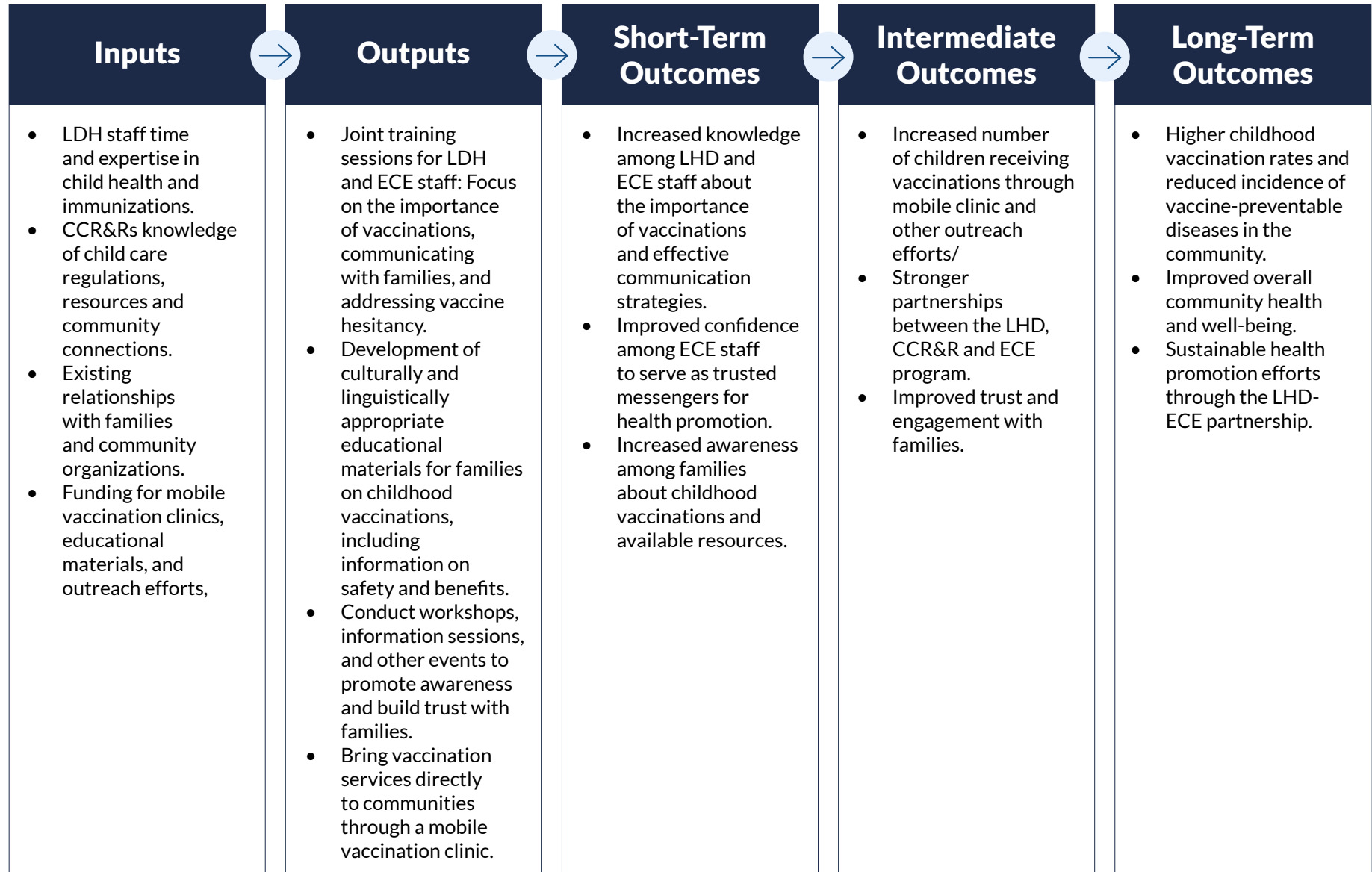
### **Why Logic Models Matter**

- Clarity and Focus: They help you define your goals, plan activities strategically, and anticipate challenges.
- Communication: A visual logic model is an effective way to share your partnership's vision with stakeholders and the community.
- Evaluation: It provides a framework for measuring progress and demonstrating the impact of your work.

A logic model is a powerful tool that helps your partnership stay on track and achieve its goals. By understanding the connections between your resources, actions, and desired results, you can create a clear roadmap for success.



## Example: LHD and ECE Partnership Logic Model



## Readiness Assessment: Laying the Groundwork for Success

Before embarking on a partnership, it's essential to assess your organization's readiness. This involves evaluating both your internal strengths (assets) and the external factors that could influence the collaboration. By understanding your capacity and potential challenges, you can set realistic expectations, address any gaps, and increase the likelihood of a successful partnership.

### Key Questions for LHDs and ECE Programs:

#### Assets (Internal Factors)

- **Clear Goals:** Do you have well-defined goals for your work, and will a partnership help you achieve them?
- **Leadership Buy-in:** Do you have support from leadership for the partnership and its potential benefits?
- **Staffing:** Do you have adequate staff capacity to dedicate to the partnership?
- **Training:** Are your staff trained and prepared for this type of collaboration?
- **Community Understanding:** Do your staff understand the needs of the community you serve?
- **Partnership Champion:** Is there a designated individual within your organization who can lead and nurture the partnership?

#### Things to Consider (External Factors)

- **Community Support:** Do you anticipate community support for the partnership?
- **Budget:** Does your current budget allow for this kind of collaboration?
- **External Stakeholders:** Are there other organizations or individuals in the community who could contribute to or support the partnership?
- **Policy and Regulatory Environment:** Are current policies and regulations conducive to this type of partnership?

## Assessing Your Readiness

Use the following tool to gauge your organization’s readiness. While not exhaustive, these indicators can help you identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

Readiness Indicator	Yes	No	N/A	Notes/Action Steps
Clear organizational goals that align with the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Leadership support for the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate staff capacity to dedicate to the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff trained and prepared for collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Understanding of the community’s needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Designated partnership champion within the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anticipated community support for the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sufficient budget for partnership activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Identified external stakeholders who can support the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Supportive policy and regulatory environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### Additional Considerations

Beyond the indicators listed above, consider these additional factors that could impact your readiness:

- **Organizational Culture:** Is your organization’s culture conducive to collaboration and open communication?
- **Past Partnership Experience:** Have you engaged in successful partnerships before? What lessons can you apply to this new collaboration?
- **Communication Strategies:** Do you have effective communication channels in place to facilitate information sharing and decision-making within the partnership?
- **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** Have you established processes for addressing potential conflicts or disagreements within the partnership?

## Taking Action

If your assessment reveals areas where your organization lacks capacity, develop action plans to address these gaps before or during the early stages of the partnership. This could involve:

- Seeking additional funding or resources
- Providing training and professional development for staff
- Building stronger relationships with community stakeholders
- Advocating for policy or regulatory changes

Remember:

- Readiness is an ongoing process. Continuously assess and reassess your organization's capacity throughout the partnership to ensure its success.
- Open and honest communication with your partner about your organization's strengths and challenges is crucial for building trust and fostering a productive collaboration.

Through proactively addressing readiness, you can lay a strong foundation for a sustainable and impactful LHD-ECE partnership that benefits the health and well-being of children and families in your community.

## The Partnership Pathway

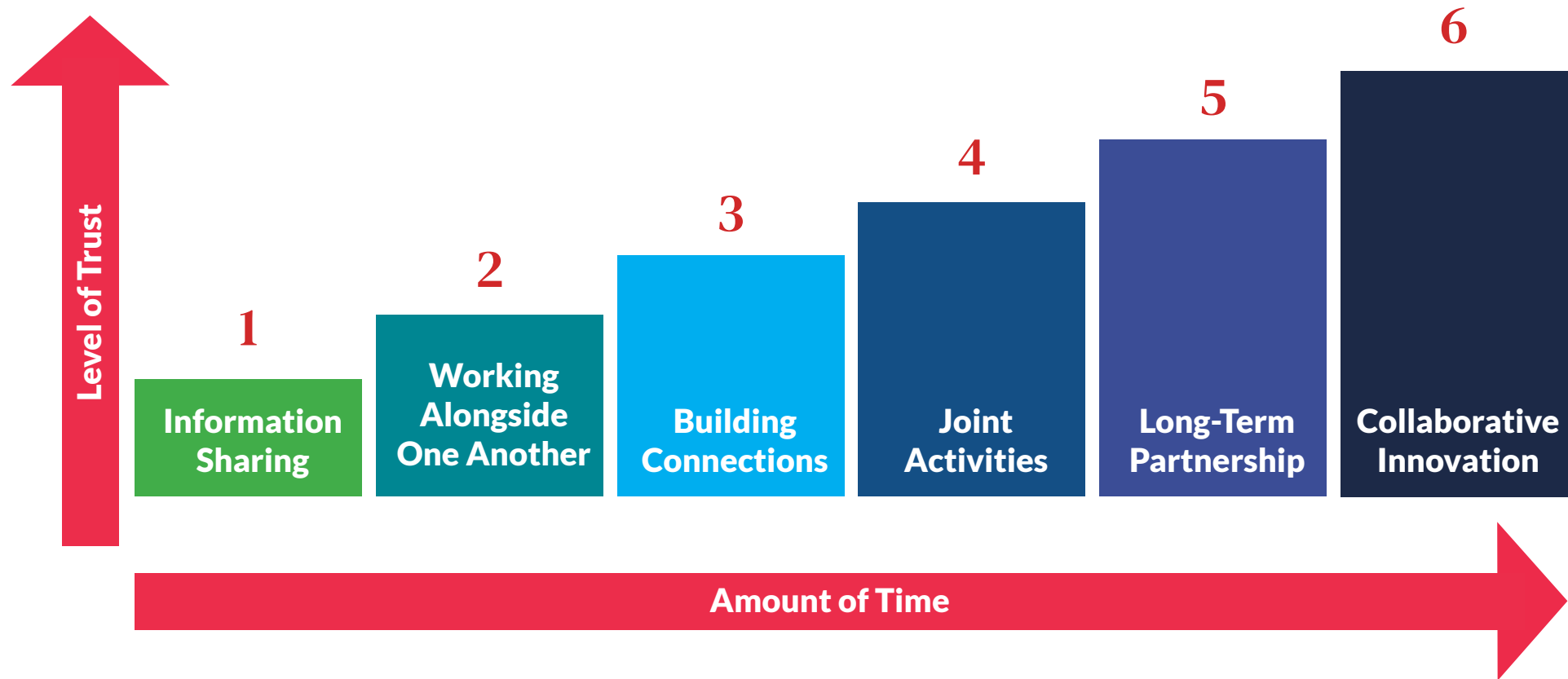
Like nurturing a seed into a thriving plant, successful partnerships require time, effort, and intentional focus. Taking the time to purposefully plan and implement each stage of a partnership supports sustainability, as trust, mutual understanding, and a shared sense of ownership increases with each phase. Recognizing and embracing the incremental progress helps partners navigate the collaborative journey with clarity and purpose, ultimately facilitating greater impact.

The “Partnership Pathway” depicts the phases of a potential partnership, from initiation and information sharing to the co-creation of transformation solutions that could significantly enhance child health and well-being in our communities.

Every partnership will be different, and that's okay. Every stage has its purpose and benefits. The goal is to approach each potential collaboration with intention and recognize the benefits that can result from combining the strengths and assets of aligned partners.

A visual representation of the Partnership Pathway, along with descriptions of each step, examples relevant to LHD-ECE partnerships, and potential benefits, is provided to guide your understanding.

## The Partnership Pathway



Source: Adapted from the Institute for Medicaid Innovation. For more information and details about the Partnership Pathway, please access the Institute for Medicaid Innovation's ["Value of Investing in Social Determinants of Health Toolkit: Grounding Value in Authentic Partnerships"](#), September 2023.

## Exploring the Partnership Pathway

Stage	Description	LHD-ECE Examples	Benefits
1	Exchanging basic information and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHD shares a fact sheet on childhood immunizations and ECE program shares a program overview.</li> <li>Both partners share areas of interest or need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes initial contact and awareness and lays the groundwork for future interactions.</li> <li>Identifies potential areas of collaboration.</li> </ul>
2	Partners begin to interact in common spaces, though their activities are still independent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives from both organizations serve on a local early childhood advisory council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases awareness and understanding of each other's work and priorities.</li> <li>Builds rapport and informal connections between staff members.</li> <li>Creates opportunities for spontaneous interaction and information sharing.</li> <li>Lays the groundwork for more formal collaboration in the future.</li> </ul>
3	Collaborating on short-term, defined activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHD and ECE program co-host a health fair for families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds trust and provides opportunities to learn about each other's strengths and working styles.</li> <li>Demonstrates the value of collaboration through tangible outcomes.</li> </ul>
4	Engaging in ongoing communication and shared initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHD and ECE program establish a regular meeting schedule to discuss common goals and challenges.</li> <li>They create a shared referral system for children with health or developmental needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthens relationships and fosters a sense of shared ownership.</li> <li>Improves coordination and efficiency of services.</li> <li>Enhances communication and problem-solving skills.</li> </ul>
5	Formalizing the partnership and working towards mutually beneficial outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHD and ECE program outline their shared vision and commitment.</li> <li>They develop a shared data system to track progress and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solidifies the partnership and ensures long-term sustainability.</li> <li>Increases opportunities for funding and resource sharing.</li> <li>Facilitates more ambitious and impactful projects.</li> </ul>
6	Collaborating to design and implement innovative programs and system-level changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LHD and ECE program co-design a new model for integrating health and early learning services.</li> <li>They develop and evaluate new interventions to address health disparities in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables transformative change and addresses root causes of health inequities.</li> <li>Leverages the collective expertise and creativity of both partners.</li> <li>Creates sustainable solutions that benefit the entire community.</li> </ul>

## Resource for LHDs

Penn State Extension Better Kid Care's *Building Collaborative Partnerships Between Local Health Departments and Early Care and Education Programs to Support the Health and Well-Being of Children and Families in the Community* is a comprehensive resource designed to help LHDs and ECE programs create and maintain effective partnerships. This document includes a detailed logic model template, readiness assessment, and step-by-step guidance for establishing goals, tracking progress, and evaluating partnerships to ensure long-term success. You can find this resource in [Appendix A](#).

Note: While this resource is framed with a focus on LHDs, the tools, strategies, and guidance it offers are broadly applicable to ECE programs, CCR&Rs, and other community partners. These insights can help all partners form and sustain successful collaborations that contribute to improving community health and early childhood well-being.

### **Need Further Assistance?**

If you have any questions or need additional support implementing the strategies outlined in this toolkit, please do not hesitate to reach out to Child Care Aware® of America's technical assistance (TA) team. We are here to help you optimize your efforts and achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and families you serve. Reach out to our TA team by [completing this form](#).



## Applying Best Practices for Thriving LHD-ECE Partnerships

Building a successful partnership between local health departments (LHDs) and early care and education (ECE) programs requires a commitment from both parties and a focus on clear communication, shared goals, and mutual benefit. Here are some key best practices to consider:

- **Identify Potential Collaborators:** Finding the right partners is the first crucial step in building a successful LHD-ECE collaboration. Effective partnerships begin with a clear understanding of the community and how others' strengths can contribute to the partnership's goals.
- **Focus on Shared Values:** Determine the core values that unite both LHDs and ECE programs, such as promoting children's well-being and supporting families. These shared values will serve as a foundation for building trust, guiding decision-making, and strengthening collaboration.
- **Establish Clear Communication Channels:** Designate points of contact within each organization and schedule meetings to discuss goals, progress, and challenges. Regular communication is essential.
- **Define Roles and Responsibilities:** Develop a shared understanding of each partner's role in the collaboration. This helps avoid confusion and ensures everyone is working toward the same objectives.
- **Set SMARTIE Goals:** Establish Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable goals for your partnership. This provides a clear roadmap for success and allows you to track progress.
- **Develop a Letter of Agreement or Letter of Collaboration:** Outline the partnership's goals, roles, and responsibilities to provide a framework for collaboration.
- **Take Action:** After roles and responsibilities are determined and goals are established, you are ready to implement the planned activities and initiatives.
- **Celebrate Successes:** Recognize and celebrate achievements along the way. This helps maintain momentum and keeps everyone motivated.
- **Continuously Evaluate and Adapt:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of your partnership. Identify areas for improvement and adapt your strategies as needed to ensure continued success.

Following these best practices enables LHDs and ECE programs to forge resilient, enduring partnerships that positively impact young children, their families, and the broader community.

## Identify Potential Collaborators

Begin by identifying key partners in your community. Ensuring early engagement and commitment from these partners is crucial for establishing a strong foundation for collaboration.

- **Engage Key Partners Early:** Build support and ensure commitment by engaging with key partners from both LHDs and ECE programs early in the process. This mutual commitment helps to align goals and fosters a sense of shared ownership over the collaboration.
- **Utilize GIS Mapping Tools:** Child Care Aware® of America's (CCAoA) GIS map, [United States Pediatric Public Health & Early Care & Education Infrastructure](#), can help with identifying partners. It includes locations of LHDs, child care centers, and child care resource and referral (CCR&R) organizations.
- **Complete a Community Profile to Assess Needs and Assets:** CCAoA's [United States Pediatric Public Health & Early Care & Education Infrastructure Story Map and Community Profile Worksheet](#) will assist in finding potential communities of focus. The story map links to the interactive map dashboard and explains the map layers, including data from the Child Opportunity Index (COI) and Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). These data can help partners prioritize collaborative efforts in areas where support and resources are needed most. This data-driven approach will facilitate in discovering community needs and assets. This information is crucial for informing the development of collaborative health promotion strategies that aim to improve child well-being.
- **Consider Community Needs:** Focus on communities that may benefit most from the partnership, particularly those with higher levels of social vulnerability or lower access to health and educational resources.

## Collaboration Spectrum: Descriptions and Examples

The Collaboration Spectrum is a valuable tool for assessing your current level of interaction with potential or existing partners. It highlights the varying degrees of partnership, from minimal engagement to complete integration. Recognizing that not all stages represent full collaboration, the spectrum acknowledges the benefits of different partnership levels. Often, initiating information sharing paves the way for building trust and relationships that can evolve into stronger partnerships.

This tool is especially important for LHDs and ECE programs, which often face resource limitations such as time, staff, funding, and competing priorities. By identifying where current and potential partners fall on the continuum, you can strategically identify collaboration opportunities aligned with your goals. The objective is to be deliberate and thoughtful about when and how to collaborate, ensuring that both organizations' resources, goals, and capacities are aligned to achieve impactful and sustainable outcomes.

Example:

An LHD and ECE program may currently be at the “Communicate” level, sharing information occasionally. By using the Collaboration Spectrum, they might identify “Coordinate” as their desired level of collaboration. This realization can guide them to develop action steps, such as establishing regular meetings and creating a shared communication plan, to move towards a more coordinated and aligned partnership. Remember, the Collaboration Spectrum is a dynamic tool. As your partnership evolves, revisit the scale to reassess your progress and identify new opportunities for growth.

The Collaboration Spectrum is a tool adapted from the Tamarack Institute and may be accessed [here](#). An expanded version of the Tamarack Institute’s Collaboration Spectrum is also available [here](#).

# Collaboration Spectrum



	Compete	Co-Exist	Communicate	Cooperate	Coordinate	Collaborate	Integrate
Descriptions of Stages	Focus on individual goals and priorities, sometimes competing for the same limited resources, partners or public attention.	Aware of each other's presence and work within the community but have no formal interaction, despite potential overlaps in goals or populations served.	Exchange information, often in an unplanned manner or an as-needed basis, such as at community meetings or through networking events.	Work together on specific tasks or projects, typically short-term or event-focused, often informally.	Proactively plan and align efforts to achieve shared outcomes, ensuring efficient use of resources and complementary services.	Engage in a more formalized, longer-term partnership with shared goals, decision-making and resources. May involve ongoing evaluation of joint progress.	Achieve a level of sustainable partnership through strategically integrated programs or initiatives that may merge funding sources, data collection, policies or procedures.
Descriptions of Stages	LHDs and ECE programs apply for the same grant funding to support child health initiatives, missing an opportunity to collaborate, which might have increased their chances of securing the funding.	LHD and ECE programs attend the same coalition meetings but don't engage or share data that could benefit both groups.	LHDs and ECE programs share safety updates and relevant guidelines at community events, but their work remains independent, without coordinated efforts.	LHDs and ECE programs cooperate informally by distributing health and safety resources to families, but they don't have formal agreements or shared long-term goals.	LHDs and ECE programs coordinate flu vaccination campaigns and child health screenings to ensure resources are maximized and families have easier access to services.	LHDs and ECE programs collaborate to develop a comprehensive child health plan that makes it easier for families to access services, with both organizations contributing staff, resources, and making decisions together.	An LHD and an ECE program establish a formal, long-term partnership with shared goals. They co-develop and implement comprehensive health policies and procedures for the ECE center, including protocols for illness management, immunization tracking, and health education. The LHD provides trainings for ECE staff, and both organizations collaborate on data collection and analysis to continuously improve child health outcomes.

## How to Use the Collaboration Spectrum:

**Instructions:** Use this worksheet to reflect on your current and potential partners. Consider where these partners fall on the Collaboration Spectrum and assess whether this level of collaboration is working for you. Then, identify opportunities for deepening collaboration and the next steps.

1. List Current and Potential Partners:
  - Start by listing partners you are currently working with or would like to work with.
2. Identify Current Stage on the Collaboration Spectrum:
  - For each partner, identify where you currently are on the Collaboration Spectrum (e.g., Communicate, Cooperate, etc.).
3. Consider Shared Goals:
  - What shared goals do you have with this partner? How does collaborating with this partner align with your organization's strategic goals and mission?
4. Assess Opportunities:
  - Is this level of collaboration sufficient, or are there benefits to moving to a deeper level of collaboration (e.g., from Communicate to Coordinate)?
5. Identify Next Steps:
  - What actions can you take to move to the next level of collaboration? What resources, planning, or coordination would be needed?

## Collaboration Spectrum Worksheet

Partner/Potential Partner	Current Stage	Shared Goal(s)	Opportunities	Next Steps
ABC Organization	Communicate	Commitment to child health and safety.	Moving from communication to a deeper stage could benefit both organizations and maximize resources.	Schedule a meeting with ABC Organization to discuss potential opportunities and interests.

The Spectrum of Opportunity Worksheet helps LHDs explore potential ECE partners beyond CCR&Rs and CCHCs, particularly for increasing childhood vaccination rates. It guides LHDs to consider each organization’s priorities, current involvement in vaccine-related initiatives, and potential opportunities for collaboration. This resource was adapted by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s [State Obesity Prevention Efforts Targeting the Early Care and Education Setting | Quick Start Action Guide | April 2018 \(cdc.gov\)](#). (See Appendix B).

SECTION 1: Potential Key ECE Stakeholders	What are the agency's priorities?	Are you already working with them?	Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?	Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?	Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?	Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?
<p><b>State Early Childhood Advisory Councils</b></p> <p>The councils provide state coordination and collaboration among all of the early childhood stakeholders to improve education and quality.</p>						



## Focus on Shared Values

A strong partnership is built on a foundation of shared values and mutual respect. Identifying and embracing these common principles early on creates a sense of common purpose. This shared understanding not only guides decision-making and strengthens collaboration, but it also fosters a deeper level of trust that is essential for long-term success.

### Best Practices:

- **Early Exploration:** Schedule dedicated time during initial partnership meetings to discuss and identify core values that are important to both organizations. These early conversations serve as “get to know you” opportunities and facilitate relationship building.
- **Open Communication:** Encourage open and honest communication to ensure a clear understanding of each other’s values and priorities.
- **Find Common Ground:** While each organization may have unique values, focus on identifying the common ground that can serve as a foundation for collaboration.
- **Value Integration:** Weave shared values into the partnership’s mission statement, goals, activities, and communication materials.
- **Value-Driven Decision Making:** Use the identified shared values to guide decision-making within the partnership.
- **Active Listening and Respectful Dialogue:** Demonstrate genuine interest in each other’s perspectives and concerns, even when viewpoints differ. Engage in respectful dialogue to build understanding and find common ground.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Be transparent about your organization’s actions and decisions and hold yourselves accountable to the shared values of the partnership.

### Real-World Examples:

- **Example 1:** A local CCR&R and LHD both prioritize equity and access to care. They collaborate to create a mobile health clinic that brings immunizations and health screenings directly to underserved communities.
- **Example 2:** A LHD and local CCR&R both value data-driven decision making. They partner to develop a survey for ECE programs to gather feedback from families on their health needs and preferences, using the data to inform health promotion strategies.

### Exercises to Foster Shared Values

#### 1. Values Brainstorming:

- Independently, have representatives from the LHD and ECE entity brainstorm a list of their organization’s core values.
- Come together as a group and share the lists, identifying common themes and values that overlap.
- Discuss what each partner is looking to gain from the collaboration.

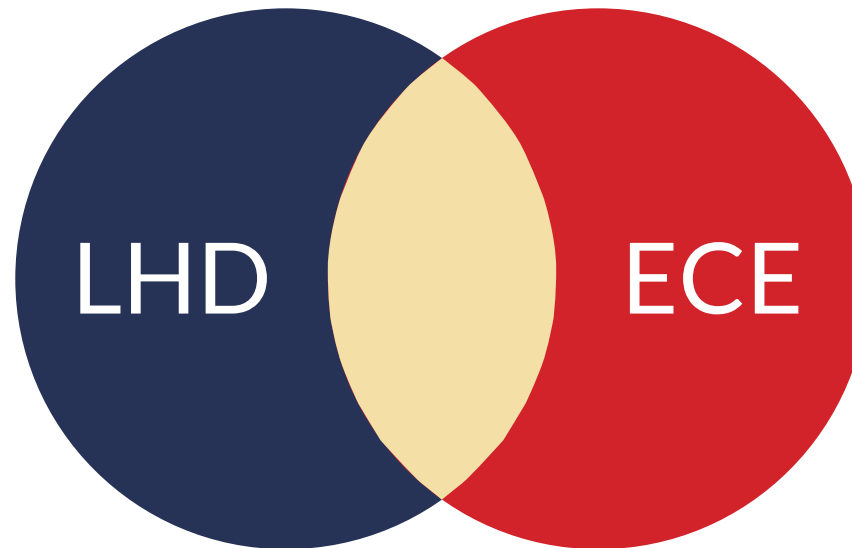
## 2. Shared Values Venn Diagram:

- Create a Venn diagram with two overlapping circles representing the LHD and ECE program.
- In each circle, list the values unique to each organization.
- In the overlapping area, identify the shared values that form the foundation of the partnership.

## Shared Values Venn Diagram Example

### LHD

- **Public Health:** Protecting and promoting the health of the entire community, with a focus on preventive measures.
- **Health Equity:** Reducing health disparities and ensuring all children have access to essential health services.
- **Outreach and Education:** Providing public education and outreach programs on health topics relevant to children and families.
- **Evidence-Based Practices:** Utilizing data and scientific evidence to inform public health policies and interventions.



### ECE+LHD

- **Child Well-being:** Ensuring the physical, social, and emotional well-being of children is a core value for both LHDs and ECE.
- **Equity and Access:** Both partners strive to provide all children with equitable access to quality early learning experiences and health services.
- **Individual Learning:** Providing individualized learning experiences that cater to each child's needs and strengths.
- **Positive Learning:** Creating safe, nurturing, and stimulating environments that promote positive social interactions.

### ECE

- **Play-Based Learning:** ECE programs prioritize fostering a love for learning through play and exploration.
- **Holistic Development:** ECE programs focus on nurturing children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.
- **Individual Learning:** Providing individualized learning experiences that cater to each child's needs and strengths.
- **Positive Learning:** Creating safe, nurturing, and stimulating environments that promote positive social interactions.

### 3. Values-in-Action Scenario Discussion:

- Present a hypothetical scenario that the partnership may encounter (e.g., addressing a child’s developmental delay).
- Discuss how each partner’s values would guide their approach to the situation.
- Identify how shared values can lead to a more unified and effective response.

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### Template for Highlighting Shared Values

Partnership: [Name of Local Health Department] - [Name of ECE Program]

Date: [Date]

Shared Values:

- List 3-5 core values that both the LHD and ECE program share (e.g., child well-being, family support, collaboration, equity).
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

### How Shared Values Guide Our Partnership

- Briefly describe how each shared value is reflected in the partnership’s mission, goals, and activities.

Establishing a shared purpose will foster trust, understanding, and a more successful partnership that ultimately benefits the children and families you serve.

## Establish Clear Communication Channels

Strong communication is the backbone of any successful partnership. Here are some best practices, exercises, and templates to establish and maintain clear communication channels between LHDs and ECEs:

### Best Practices:

- **Designate Points of Contact:** Identify specific staff members in each organization responsible for communication and information sharing.
- **Establish Communication Cadence:** Determine a regular schedule for communication (e.g., weekly emails, monthly meetings).
- **Utilize a Variety of Communication Channels:** Effective communication is key to a successful partnership. To ensure everyone can participate fully and information is shared effectively, it's important to use a variety of communication channels, such as:
  - In-person meetings can be invaluable for building relationships and fostering open dialogue.
  - Phone calls or video meetings can offer a more personal connection than email and allow for real-time discussion and clarification.
  - Email is a convenient way to share information and updates.
  - Online platforms (like Google Drive or Dropbox) and project management tools (such as Asana, Trello, or Monday.com) can provide a central hub for document sharing, tracking progress, and asynchronous communication.

The ideal communication strategy will vary depending on the needs and preferences of the partners involved. Early in the partnership, discuss which channels work best for everyone and establish a clear communication plan that outlines when and how different channels will be used. Be open to adjusting the plan as needed based on feedback and evolving needs.

- **Develop a Communication Plan:** Outline the purpose of each communication method, who uses it, and when. No-cost examples may be found from [The Community Tool Box](#), a public service developed and managed by the University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development ([ctb.ku.edu](http://ctb.ku.edu)).
- **Foster Open Communication:** Create a safe space for open dialogue and constructive feedback within the partnership. Encourage active listening and respectful communication, even when disagreements arise.
- **Promote Transparency:** Share information openly and honestly, keeping each other informed of relevant updates, concerns, or challenges.
- **Actively Listen and Respond:** Pay close attention during communication, ask clarifying questions, and provide timely responses.
- **Document Key Decisions and Agreements:** Maintain clear records of important discussions, decisions, and action items.

### Exercises to Strengthen Communication:

- **Joint Needs Assessment:** Conduct a collaborative exercise to identify shared goals and communication needs for the partnership. Discuss potential activities that can be implemented to strengthen the community.
- **Communication Style Inventory:** Have partners complete a communication style assessment to understand preferred methods and potential challenges.
- **Role-Playing Scenarios:** Practice effective communication approaches through role-playing exercises that simulate potential situations (e.g., addressing concerns, sharing updates).

### Templates to Facilitate Communication:

- **Meeting Agenda Template:** Create a template for meeting agendas, outlining topics, discussion points, and action items. Examples can be found from [Build the Foundation](#) and [King County](#).
- **Meeting Minutes Template:** Develop a template for capturing key points, decisions, and next steps during meetings.
- **Joint Communication Template:** Design a template for joint communication pieces (e.g., press releases, announcements) that reflect both partners' voices.
- **Shared Calendar Template:** Utilize a shared online calendar to track meetings, deadlines, and important dates.

### Additional Tips:

- **Utilize Technology:** Explore communication platforms like video conferencing or instant messaging tools to facilitate real-time communication. Build in flexibility to ensure inclusive access to methods of communication.
- **Encourage Open Communication:** Create a safe space for open dialogue and constructive feedback within the partnership. For more information on inclusive and open communication, please see [Inclusive Facilitation for Social Change](#) or [Conducting Effective Meetings](#), a no-cost resource from the University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development ([ctb.ku.edu](http://ctb.ku.edu)).
- **Celebrate Communication Successes:** Recognize and acknowledge instances of clear and effective communication to reinforce positive practices.
- **Embrace Equity, Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Ensure that partners and stakeholders have meaningful access to inclusive communication to optimize partnership outcomes.
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides helpful [Communication Planning Tools](#)<sup>1</sup> at no cost including:
    - [Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication](#)

<sup>1</sup>Reference to specific commercial products, manufacturers, companies, or trademarks does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation by the U.S. Government, Department of Health and Human Services, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) offers a free 10-course series called [Roots of Health Inequity](#) that explores the root causes of health inequities. Learn about using an equity lens to create compelling stories and ideas in your health promotion communications in [Course 7: Building Narrative Power](#).

In implementing these best practices, exercises, and templates, ECE programs and LHDs can build strong communication channels that foster collaboration, transparency, and a thriving partnership.



## Defining Roles and Responsibilities

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are crucial for effective collaboration. Understanding who does what and who makes decisions helps prevent confusion, fosters accountability, and sets the stage for a successful partnership.

### Best Practices:

#### 1. Collaborate:

- Involve representatives from both the LHD and ECE entity in defining roles and responsibilities. This fosters a sense of ownership and shared accountability.

#### 2. Be Specific:

- Clearly outline the specific tasks, activities, and decision-making authorities for each partner.
- Avoid vague statements or jargon and ensure everyone understands what is expected of them.
- Child Care Aware® of America's Early Care and Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary can help with clarifying definitions of ECE-related terms for partners.

#### 3. Align with Goals:

- Ensure that assigned roles and responsibilities directly contribute to achieving the overall goals of the LHD-ECE partnership.

#### 4. Be Realistic:

- Assign roles based on individual strengths, expertise, and capacity.
- Avoid overloading any one person or team with too many responsibilities.

#### 5. Maintain Flexibility:

- Roles and responsibilities may need to be adjusted as the project progresses, so be open to adapting as needed.

#### 6. Communicate:

- Discuss roles and responsibilities regularly with all partners to ensure everyone is on the same page and any potential issues are addressed promptly.

#### 7. Track Progress:

- Establish clear mechanisms for monitoring progress and ensuring each partner fulfills their designated responsibilities. Agreeing ahead of time on how progress will be monitored and data will be collected helps with evaluating if the partnership goals were achieved.

## Exercises to Facilitate Shared Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

### 1. Skills and Interests Inventory:

- Conduct a brief inventory of skills, interests, and experience related to the partnership's goals. This can help identify potential areas of responsibility and ensure that tasks are assigned based on strengths and preferences.

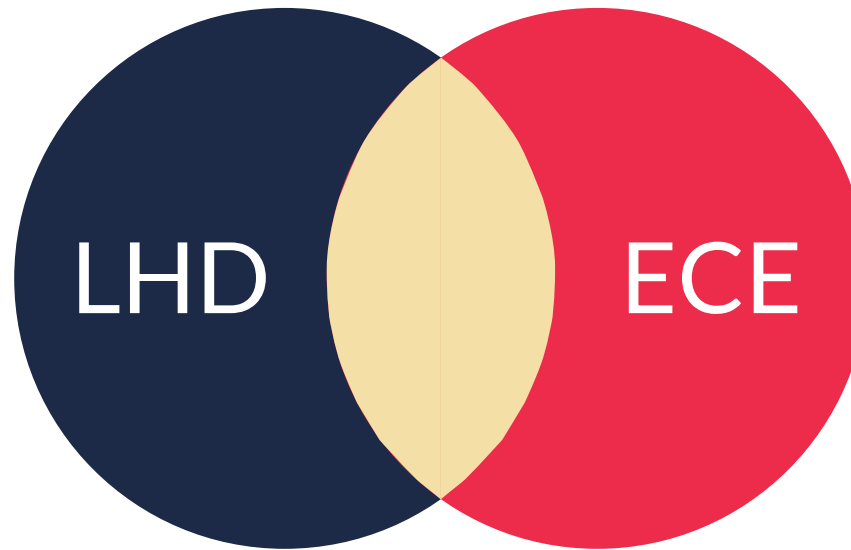
### 2. Venn Diagram:

- Create a Venn diagram with two overlapping circles representing the LHD and ECE entity.
- Brainstorm and list the unique strengths and areas of expertise each partner brings to the collaboration (in their respective circles).
- In the overlapping area, identify shared responsibilities and collaborative activities.

## Sample Venn Diagram of an LHD-ECE Partnership

### LHD

- **Public Health Initiatives:** Implementing programs that promote community health and prevent disease outbreaks.
- **Nutritional Guidance:** Providing resources and education on healthy eating habits for children and families.
- **Mental Health Services:** Connecting children and families with mental health services when needed.
- **Communicable Disease Control:** Monitoring and preventing the spread of communicable diseases among children.
- **Professional Development:** Offering training and professional development opportunities for ECE staff on health-related topics.



### ECE+LHD

- **Child Health and Well-being:** Ensuring children are healthy, safe, and prepared to learn is a core objective for both ECE programs and LHDs.
- **Immunizations:** Collaboration can ensure children receive timely vaccinations according to the recommended schedule.
- **Healthy Habits:** Working together, ECE programs and LHDs can promote healthy eating habits, physical activity, and good hygiene practices among children.
- **Early Identification:** Partnerships can facilitate early identification of potential health concerns in children.
- **Family Support:** Both ECE programs and LHDs can play a role in connecting families with essential resources and building a supportive network.

### ECE Program

- **Early Childhood Education:** Providing age-appropriate learning experiences that foster cognitive, social, and emotional development.
- **Curriculum Development:** Integrating health and wellness topics into the ECE curriculum.
- **Social-Emotional Development:** Supporting children's social-emotional skills and building resilience.
- **Parent Engagement:** Working with families to ensure continuity of care and healthy habits at home.
- **Developmental Assessment:** Evaluating children's current skills and development.

### 3. RACI Chart

Successful partnerships depend on everyone knowing who's responsible for what. A RACI chart is a simple tool that can help your ECE program and LHD clearly define roles and responsibilities for each task in your collaboration. This can prevent misunderstandings and ensure everyone is working together smoothly.

#### What is a RACI Chart?

RACI stands for:

- **Responsible:** The person or team who will do the work to complete the task.
- **Accountable:** The person who is ultimately responsible for the task's success and has the final say on decisions.
- **Consulted:** The people whose input is needed for the task to be completed successfully.
- **Informed:** The people who need to be kept up to date on the task's progress, but don't have direct involvement.

#### How to Use a RACI Chart

1. List Your Tasks: Start by listing all the tasks involved in your LHD-ECE partnership project. This could include things like:
  - Planning health education workshops
  - Conducting developmental screenings
  - Sharing information with families
  - Coordinating immunization clinics
2. Identify Roles: For each task, identify who is **responsible (R)**, **accountable (A)**, **consulted (C)**, and **informed (I)**. Use the following questions to help you:
  - Who will do the hands-on work to complete this task? **(R)**
  - Who has the final say on decisions related to this task? **(A)**
  - Whose input or expertise is needed to complete this task successfully? **(C)**
  - Who needs to be kept in the loop about progress on this task? **(I)**
3. Fill in the Chart: Once you've identified the roles for each task, fill in the RACI chart with the appropriate letters next to each person or team's name.

## Example RACI Chart

### RACI

- **Responsible:** The person or team who will do the work to complete the task.
- **Accountable:** The person who is ultimately responsible for the task's success and has the final say on decisions.
- **Consulted:** The people whose input is needed for the task to be completed successfully.
- **Informed:** The people who need to be kept up to date on the task's progress, but don't have direct involvement.

Task	ECE Program	LHD	CHC (If Applicable)	Families
Plan health education workshops	R, A	C	C	I (Receive information about upcoming workshops)
Share information with families	R	C (Provide content)	I (Receive information about resource)	I (Receive information from both ECE and LHD)
About Health Topics				
Coordinate immunization clinics	C	R, A	C (If expertise is needed)	I (Receive information about clinic dates and locations)

### Tips for Using RACI Charts

- **Keep It Simple:** Don't overload the chart with too many tasks or stakeholders. Focus on the key tasks and decision-makers.
- **Be Flexible:** RACI charts are not set in stone. Roles and responsibilities may need to be adjusted as the project progresses.
- **Communicate:** Use the RACI chart as a tool for communication. Discuss roles and responsibilities with all partners to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- **By using a RACI chart, you can ensure that your LHD-ECE partnership runs smoothly, with clear roles, efficient communication, and shared accountability.**

### Initiative and Activity Examples for LHD-ECE Partnerships

Initiative or Activity	ECE Program Responsibility	LHD Responsibility
Immunizations and Vaccinations	Share information about immunization and vaccination services provided by the LHD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer immunizations and vaccinations to children and adults (family members)</li> </ul>
Immunization Records Management	Maintain accurate immunization records for all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide resources and training on immunization schedules and best practices for recordkeeping.</li> <li>Offer technical assistance with electronic immunization information systems (<i>if applicable</i>).</li> </ul>
Health Screenings	Conduct vision and hearing screenings according to state or local guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training for ECE staff on conducting screenings.</li> <li>Offer referral pathways for children who require further evaluation.</li> </ul>
Healthy Eating Education	Integrate age-appropriate lessons on nutrition and healthy eating habits into the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ECE staff with educational materials and resources on healthy eating.</li> <li>Conduct workshops or presentations on childhood nutrition for parents and caregivers.</li> </ul>
Physical Activity Promotion	Schedule daily opportunities for physical activity and outdoor play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share best practices for incorporating physical activity throughout the ECE program day.</li> <li>Offer training on creating safe and developmentally appropriate physical activity spaces.</li> </ul>
Mental Health Awareness	Observe children’s social emotional development and identify potential concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training for ECE staff on recognizing signs of social emotional delays or mental health challenges.</li> <li>Offer referral pathways for children and families in need of mental health services.</li> </ul>

Family Engagement	Organize workshops or information sessions for families on childhood health and development topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop educational materials (handouts, websites) on child health topics for families.</li><li>• Participate in family engagement events hosted by the ECE program.</li></ul>
Professional Development	Identify training needs related to child health and well-being for ECE staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offer workshops or training sessions on relevant health topics for ECE staff.</li><li>• Share online resources and professional development opportunities.</li></ul>

#### 4. Partnership Engagement Plan: NACCHO developed a Partnership Engagement Plan for LHDs.

For LHDs seeking a more detailed and structured approach to partnership planning, consider using the Partnership Engagement Plan template provided in [Appendix C](#). This tool will help you identify key stakeholders, outline their areas of interest, and develop strategies for effective engagement throughout the project.

Potential Partner	Area(s) of Interest	Phase of Project	Engagement Project	Communication Method(s)	Activity or Task	ECE Responsibility	LHD Responsibility	Anticipated Barriers
Sunshine CCR&R Agency	Vaccinations	Planning	Collaborative	Monthly in-person meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, virtual meetings on the third Tuesday of the month, emails and phone calls as needed.	Sunshine CCR&R and ABC County Healthy Department will collaborate to increase vaccinations for children attending child care and their families.	Share information about vaccination services provided by the health department, recommended vaccination schedules, and dates and times for vaccinations.	Provide information to Sunshine CCR&R to distribute to local child care providers and administer vaccinations to children and family members.	Transportation, vaccine hesitancy, date/ times for working families.

These best practices, suggested exercises, and tools are offered to help ECE programs and LHDs develop a clear and shared understanding of each partner’s roles and responsibilities in the collaboration. This clarity will lead to smoother communication, less confusion, and ultimately, a more successful partnership.



## Set SMARTIE Goals for Equitable Impact

Setting clear goals is essential for guiding and measuring the success of your LHD-ECE partnership. SMARTIE goals go beyond the traditional SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, and Time-bound) by adding two crucial elements:

- Inclusive (I): How will we ensure diverse perspectives are considered, and that traditionally underserved groups are meaningfully involved in the process?
- Equitable (E): How will this goal help address unfair differences in health outcomes and opportunities for children and families?

SMARTIE goals ensure your partnership not only achieves results but also works towards a fairer and more just system for all.

### Best Practices for Setting SMARTIE Goals:

#### 1. Collaborate:

- Involve representatives from both ECE programs and the LHD, as well as families and community members, in the goal-setting process. This ensures everyone has a voice and fosters shared ownership of the goals.

#### 2. Align with Your Mission:

- Ensure the goals directly support the overall mission of the partnership and the specific needs of the community you serve.

#### 3. Be Specific and Measurable:

- Clearly define what you want to achieve and how you'll measure progress.
- Use concrete indicators to track success (e.g. numbers, percentages, etc.).
- Analyze demographic and health data to identify groups of children and families who may face barriers to health care or experience health inequities. This information can be used to tailor partnership efforts and resources to better meet the specific needs of these communities.
- Tools such as the [Community Guide to Advance Health Information Equity](#) and Child Care Aware® of America's [United States Pediatric Public Health & Early Care & Education Infrastructure](#) map can be helpful in this process.

#### 4. Aim High but Be Realistic:

- Set ambitious goals that will make a real difference, but make sure they are achievable with the time, resources, and skills available.

#### 5. Set a Timeline:

- Establish a clear deadline for achieving each goal. This helps keep everyone focused and on track.

**6. Be Inclusive:**

- Consider the needs and perspectives of all children and families, especially those who may face barriers to accessing services or who have been historically marginalized.
- Ensure the goals are relevant to the needs of the children, families, and the broader community.

**7. Promote Equity:**

- Identify and address any systemic factors that contribute to health disparities and ensure that your goals actively work towards a more equitable future.

**8. Regularly Review and Adapt:**

- Schedule regular check-ins to review progress and make adjustments as needed.
- Be open to feedback and flexible in adapting your goals to meet changing needs. The [Family and Community Partnerships Reflection Tool for Family-Facing Professionals](#) can help ensure initiatives are well-rounded and address the needs of children and families effectively. Some language may need to be tailored to the ECE and LHD context.

**Exercises to Facilitate SMARTIE Goal Setting****1. Brainstorming Session:**

- Conduct a brainstorming session with LHD and ECE staff to generate a comprehensive list of potential goals for the partnership.
- Encourage creative thinking and consider both long-term and short-term goals.

**2. SMARTIE Goal Template:**

- The Management Center's [SMARTIE Goals Worksheet](#) can help participants in developing goals.

**3. Priority Setting:**

- Once a list of potential goals is established, have participants prioritize the goals based on their importance and feasibility.

Example SMARTIE Goals for an LHD-ECE Partnership:

**Example 1: Improve Access to Immunizations**

- Strategic: Increase immunization rates among children enrolled in ECE programs.
- Measurable: Increase the percentage of fully vaccinated children by 5% within six months.
- Ambitious: This goal challenges us to make significant progress but is still attainable.
- Realistic: We can achieve this by collaborating with the LHD to support and co-host vaccination clinics and providing educational materials for families.
- Time-bound: We will achieve this goal by the end of the calendar year.
- Inclusive: We will partner with community organizations to reach families who may face barriers to accessing immunizations, such as those with limited English proficiency or transportation challenges.
- Equitable: We will focus our efforts on communities with the lowest immunization rates, ensuring that all children have equal access to this vital preventive health service.

**Example 2: Enhance Family Engagement in Child Health**

- Strategic: Strengthen communication and collaboration between ECE staff, LHD staff, and families.
- Measurable: Increase family attendance at health-related workshops or events by 10% each quarter.
- Ambitious: This goal encourages us to reach more families and foster greater engagement.
- Realistic: We can achieve this by offering diverse programming, providing transportation assistance, and utilizing culturally and linguistically appropriate communication strategies.
- Time-bound: We will achieve this goal within one year.
- Inclusive: We will involve families in planning and evaluating health-related activities to ensure they meet their needs and interests.
- Equitable: We will prioritize reaching families from underserved communities and those who face barriers to accessing health information and services.

Remember: SMARTIE goals are a collaborative tool. Work together with your partners to develop goals that are meaningful, impactful, and aligned with your shared values and commitment to equity.

## Develop a Letter of Agreement or Letter of Collaboration

A Letter of Agreement or Collaboration (sometimes called a Memorandum of Understanding) is like a roadmap for your partnership. It outlines what each partner will do, who's in charge of what, and how you'll work together. It's not a legal contract, but it's a written record that helps everyone stay on the same page and avoid misunderstandings. It's also a great way to show that you're serious about working together to improve the health and well-being of children and families in your community.

### Best Practices for Setting SMARTIE Goals:

#### 1. Collaborative Development:

- Involve representatives from both ECE and public health entity in drafting the letter. This ensures a sense of ownership and shared understanding.

#### 2. Clear and Concise Language:

- Use clear, concise, and professional language that is easy for all parties to understand.
- Avoid legal jargon that may be confusing

#### 3. Key Elements:

- Include the following elements in your letter
  - Parties Involved: Clearly identify the ECE entity and the LHD as partners.
  - Purpose: Outline the overall purpose of the partnership and specific areas of collaboration.
  - Collaboration Activities: Include potential activities the partners may undertake.
  - Roles and Responsibilities: Define the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the collaboration.
  - Communication: Outline communication protocols.
  - Term and Termination: Specify the duration of the agreement and the process for termination if needed.
  - Disclaimer: Include language clarifying that the letter is not intended to be legally binding.
  - Confidentiality (Optional): If sensitive information will be shared, include a confidentiality clause.
  - Signatures: Include designated signature lines for authorized representatives from both the ECE program and the LHD.

For a template and sample letter of collaboration, please [Appendix D](#). For more in-depth information, see the [Community Collaboration Toolkit](#) from Communities of Opportunity.

#### **4. Transparency and Accessibility:**

- Publish a Summary: Create a public summary document that highlights the key goals, objectives, and outcomes of the partnership without disclosing sensitive details. This summary could be posted on both organizations' websites or shared through other communication channels.

### **Exercises to Facilitate Letter Development**

#### **1. Partnership Goals Brainstorming:**

- Conduct a brainstorming session to collaboratively develop a list of goals for the LHD-ECE partnership.

#### **2. Role-Playing Scenarios:**

- Develop scenarios that represent potential situations where collaboration is needed (e.g., addressing a child health concern, planning a joint professional development session).
- Role-play these scenarios to identify each partner's roles and responsibilities in various situations.

## Take Action: Turning Plans into Reality

Once roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and SMARTIE goals are set, it's time to put your plans into action. This phase of the partnership is where the foundational work is transformed into tangible activities and initiatives that directly impact children, families, and the community.

### Your Action Plan:

Your action plan serves as a roadmap for implementation, but the real work begins when you start carrying out the steps outlined in the plan. It's not just about having a plan—it's about taking decisive, informed action to achieve your partnership's goals.

### Best Practices for Taking Action:

- **Start with Resources in Hand:** Before launching any initiatives, ensure that all necessary resources are in place. This includes tools, staff, time, and any organizational support required to carry out the strategies effectively. Resources should be readily available as per your action plan, allowing for smooth execution.
- **Implement with Adaptability:** As you put your initiatives into motion, remain flexible. Real-world challenges will arise, and your ability to adapt is essential. While your action plan serves as a framework, be prepared to adjust strategies and activities to address unforeseen challenges or take advantage of new opportunities.
- **Engage Continuously:** Taking action is not a one-time effort. Stay engaged with all partners, communities, and interested parties throughout the process. Regular check-ins and communication are vital to ensure that everyone remains aligned with the objectives and can address any emerging issues collaboratively.
- **Build on Momentum:** As you begin to see progress, leverage these wins to build momentum. Celebrate all successes to keep motivation high and to encourage continued participation and commitment from all involved. Use these achievements to reinforce the action plan and push forward with the next steps.

**Practical Example:** An LHD and ECE program working together to implement a new health screening initiative might begin by ensuring that all resources, such as trained staff and screening materials, are in place. With resources ready, they launch the initiative, carefully monitoring the process to make any necessary adjustments in real-time. As screenings are conducted, the team stays engaged, addressing challenges like resistance from families or logistical issues as they arise. Each successful screening event is celebrated and used to maintain momentum, driving the initiative forward as part of their larger action plan.

## Celebrate Successes

### Best Practices:

- **Recognize All Wins:** Celebrate both major milestones and smaller achievements to keep motivation high.
- **Shared Recognition:** Acknowledge the contributions of both ECE staff and LHD personnel involved in the success.
- **Multiple Celebration Channels:** Utilize various communication channels to share successes with different audiences (e.g., staff meetings, community newsletters, social media, and press releases).
- **Impact Focus:** Frame celebrations around the positive impact on children, families, and the community.
- **Sustainability:** Use celebrations as opportunities to showcase the partnership's value and secure continued support.

### Exercises to Facilitate Celebration of Successes

#### 1. Success Story Brainstorming:

- Gather ECE staff and LHD representatives to brainstorm success stories from the partnership.
- Encourage sharing stories that highlight collaboration, innovation, and positive impact.

#### 2. Photo/Video Documentation:

- Capture photos or videos throughout the partnership to document achievements and milestones.
- Ensure that photo and video documentation is inclusive and represents the diversity of the community. Obtain consent from individuals before using their images or videos in promotional materials.
- Use this visual content to create engaging social media posts or presentations, working with the necessary internal partners as necessary to ensure alignment with organizational policies and procedures.

### 3. Social Media:

Here are some sample social media posts you can use to celebrate the success of the LHD-ECE partnership in increasing childhood immunization rates. Adapt these to fit the specific platforms you're using (e.g., character count for Twitter/X):

- **Facebook**

- Headline: Measles? Mumps? Rubella? Not on our watch! We're thrilled to announce that our partnership with the [Name of Local Health Department] has led to a [Percentage] increase in immunization rates amongst our children! Together, we're keeping our community healthy! #PublicHealth #ImmunizationAwareness #ECEPartnership
- Image: Use an image of children receiving vaccinations at a clinic or ECE program, with healthcare providers and teachers present.

- **Twitter/X**

- Headline: Great news! Our partnership with @[LHD social media handle] has boosted childhood immunization rates by [Percentage]! #TogetherWeThrive #PublicHealth #ECEWins

- **Instagram**

- Headline: We're celebrating a healthy accomplishment! Our collaboration with the [Name of Local Health Department] has significantly increased immunization rates in our program. Here's to protecting our children's health! #CommunityCare #ImmunizationMatters #ECExHealth

- **LinkedIn**

- **Post 1:**

- Headline: Thriving Together: How Our ECE Program Partnered with the LHD to Boost Immunization Rates
- Our early childhood education program is proud to share the success of our collaboration with the [Name of Local Health Department] in raising childhood immunization rates! Through joint efforts like educational workshops, on-site vaccination clinics, and flexible scheduling, we've seen a significant increase in fully immunized children within our program.
- This partnership exemplifies the power of collaboration in safeguarding public health. By combining expertise and resources, we can ensure the well-being of our youngest community members. #PublicHealth #ImmunizationAwareness #ECEPartnership



- **LinkedIn**

- **Post 2:**

- **Headline:** The Impact of Early Childhood Education: My Experience Partnering with the LHD on Immunization
- As the [Your Title] at the [Name of ECE Program], I've witnessed firsthand the positive impact our partnership with the LHD has had on children's health. Our collaborative approach has addressed vaccine hesitancy, increased access to immunizations, and ultimately, created a healthier learning environment for our children.
- This experience has reinforced the importance of inter-agency collaboration in the early childhood education sector. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of children and families. #CommunityPartnership #EarlyChildhoodHealth #PublicHealthChampion

- **Additional Tips**

- Tag relevant partners (LHD social media handles) in your posts.
- Include visuals – Consider adding an infographic showcasing the increase in immunization rates or a photo from a partnership event.
- Encourage engagement by asking questions in the comments (e.g., “Do you have questions about childhood immunizations?”).
- Use relevant hashtags to increase reach.
- Consider creating a short video clip showcasing the partnership's work (for platforms like Facebook and Instagram).

#### **4. Success Story Writing Workshop:**

- Conduct a workshop to guide participants in writing compelling narratives about the partnership's successes.
- These stories can be used for press releases, website content, or grant proposals. Again, ensure you work with the necessary internal partners to adhere to organizational guidelines and processes. See [Appendix E](#) for a sample success story.

#### **5. Host a Community Event:**

##### **Best Practices and Tips for Hosting Successful Community Events**

###### **Planning:**

1. **Set Clear Goals:** Define the purpose and desired outcomes of your event. What do you want to achieve? Educate, entertain, raise awareness, or generate funds?
2. **Engage the Community:** Involve community members from the beginning of the planning process to ensure the event is relevant and meets their needs. Seek input on event format, activities, and topics of interest. This collaborative approach will foster a sense of ownership and engagement, leading to higher participation and a more successful event.

3. **Form a Diverse Planning Committee:** Assemble a committee or recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the community you are trying to reach. Include individuals with varying experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds to ensure the event is inclusive and responsive to the needs of all participants. A diverse team can bring fresh ideas, insights, and solutions to the planning process, resulting in a more engaging and effective event.
4. **Establish a Budget:** Determine your financial resources and create a realistic budget for the event.
5. **Choose a Date and Time:** Consider factors like seasonality, holidays, and potential conflicts with other community events. Select times that are convenient for your intended audience.
6. **Plan for Accessibility:** Prioritize accessibility from the start to create an inclusive and enjoyable event for all participants. Designate an accessibility coordinator to oversee accessibility efforts and ensure compliance with relevant guidelines. Consult with individuals with disabilities and disability organizations for guidance on site selection, accommodations, and assistive technologies.
7. **Secure a Location:** Find a venue that is accessible, has sufficient space for your expected attendees and activities, and aligns with your budget. Consider permitting requirements.
8. **Develop a Marketing Strategy:** Utilize various channels (social media, flyers, local media) to promote the event and reach your intended audience. In your promotional materials, explicitly mention the event's commitment to accessibility and provide contact information for those needing accommodations.

### **Logistics:**

1. **Plan Activities and Entertainment:** Offer engaging activities, workshops, or entertainment that aligns with your event's theme and interests your audience.
2. **Food and Beverages:** Decide if you will offer food and drinks. If so, consider options that accommodate diverse dietary needs and preferences, including those with allergies or restrictions.
3. **Logistics and Set-up:** Develop a detailed plan for set-up, breakdown, equipment rentals, audio-visual needs, and volunteer coordination.
4. **Safety and Security:** Ensure the safety of attendees by having a security plan in place, first-aid supplies readily available, and clear emergency protocols.
5. **Permits and Insurance:** Research and obtain any necessary permits for your event (e.g., food vending, amplified music). Obtain event insurance to protect against unforeseen circumstances.
6. **Accessibility Guidelines:** Consider [ADA guidelines](#) for ensuring inclusivity and access.

**Day of the Event:**

1. **Clear Communication:** Ensure clear communication with volunteers, vendors, and participants regarding their roles and responsibilities on the day of the event.
2. **Be Flexible and Adaptable:** Be prepared to adjust as needed and address any unforeseen challenges.
3. **Delegate and Encourage:** Trust your team members and volunteers to handle their assigned tasks.
4. **Create a Welcoming Atmosphere:** Greet attendees, answer questions, and ensure everyone feels comfortable and included.

**Post-Event:**

1. **Evaluate and Debrief:** Gather feedback from attendees, volunteers, and team members to identify successes and areas for improvement.
2. **Promote the Impact:** Share photos and highlights from the event on social media and through other channels.
3. **Thank Your Supporters:** Express gratitude to volunteers, sponsors, and everyone who contributed to the event's success.
4. **Consider Future Events:** Use your experience and feedback to plan future community events that are even better.

**Day of the Event:**

- **Sustainability:** Consider eco-friendly practices like reusable materials, local sourcing, and waste reduction.
- **Fun Factor:** Don't forget the fun! Make sure your event is enjoyable and engaging for everyone involved.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with other organizations to share resources, expand reach, and leverage expertise.

These best practices and tips can help you plan and host community events that are successful, impactful, and leave a lasting positive impression on your community.

**Additional Strategies for Sharing Successes with the Community:**

Press releases, social media, website content, and other promotions can help bring positive attention to your LHD-ECE partnership, gain buy-in and support, and help to sustain momentum. Please see the [Appendix E](#) for additional ideas on celebrating and sharing successes.

## Continuously Evaluate and Adapt

### Best Practices:

- **Schedule Regular Check-Ins:** Establish regular meetings (e.g., monthly or quarterly) to discuss progress, challenges, and areas for improvement.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Utilize data from various sources (e.g., surveys, program reports, immunization rates) to track progress towards goals and measure the partnership's impact.
- **Open Communication:** Encourage open and honest communication between LHD and ECE staff to identify any concerns or areas needing adjustments.
- **Flexibility:** Be willing to adapt strategies and approaches based on learnings and changing circumstances.
- **Learn and Improve:** Identify areas for growth and improvement within the partnership. By reflecting on challenges and opportunities for change, partners can develop strategies to prevent similar issues from arising in the future.
- **Outcome-Focused Evaluation:** Focus on evaluating the partnership's effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes for children, families, and the community.

### Exercises to Facilitate Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:

#### 1. Partnership Evaluation Survey:

- Develop a brief survey for both ECE program staff and LHD personnel to gather feedback on the partnership's effectiveness.
- Include questions about communication, collaboration, resource allocation, and overall satisfaction.

#### 2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis:

- Conduct a SWOT analysis to assess the partnership's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats.
- Use this analysis to identify areas for improvement and strategize adaptations to capitalize on opportunities and mitigate potential threats.

#### 3. Scenario Planning:

- Discuss hypothetical scenarios that could impact the partnership (e.g., budget cuts, staff turnover, new community needs).
- Brainstorm potential adaptations and solutions to ensure the partnership can navigate challenges and remain effective.

## Templates for Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:

### Template 1: Partnership Evaluation Survey

Instructions: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

- Communication between the ECE program and LHD is clear and effective.
- Collaboration between staff from both organizations is smooth and efficient.
- Resources are allocated fairly and effectively to support partnership activities.
- The partnership is achieving its goals and objectives.
- I am satisfied with my overall experience in the LHD-ECE partnership.

Optional Question:

- Provide space for open-ended feedback and suggestions for improvement.

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### Template 2: SWOT Analysis

**Strengths:** List the internal strengths of the LHD-ECE partnership (e.g., strong communication channels, shared values, and dedicated staff).

**Weaknesses:** Identify any weaknesses within the partnership that hinder its effectiveness (e.g., limited resources, unclear roles, and communication gaps).

**Opportunities:** Explore external opportunities that could benefit the partnership (e.g., new funding sources, community partnerships, and innovative program models).

**Threats:** Consider potential external threats that could pose challenges to the partnership (e.g., budget cuts, staff turnover, and changes in community demographics).

ECE programs and LHDs can establish a culture of continuous evaluation and adaptation within the partnership. This will ensure that the collaboration remains effective, responsive to changing needs and ultimately achieves its goals of improving the well-being of children, families, and the community. Remember, a successful partnership is a dynamic one that is willing to learn, grow, and adapt over time.

**Example of SWOT Analysis:**

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
Opportunities:	Threats:

**Debrief Questions for Continuous Improvement in an LHD-ECE Partnership**

**Overall Partnership Effectiveness:**

- Goal Achievement: Are we on track to achieve the goals we set for the partnership?
- Impact Assessment: Have we seen any positive impacts on children, families, or the community as a result of our collaboration? If so, how can we measure this impact more effectively?
- Challenges and Obstacles: What challenges or obstacles have we encountered in implementing our partnership activities?
- Communication and Collaboration: How effective has communication been between the ECE program and the LHD? Are there ways to improve collaboration and teamwork?
- Resource Allocation: Are resources being allocated effectively to support partnership initiatives?
- Overall Satisfaction: How satisfied are you with the overall functioning of the LHD-ECE partnership?

**Specific Program or Activity Evaluation:**

- Recent Initiatives: How successful were our recent joint initiatives (e.g., workshops, vaccination clinics)?
- Strengths and Weaknesses: What were the strengths and weaknesses of these initiatives?
- Lessons Learned: What did we learn from this experience that can be applied to future activities?
- Improvements and Adaptations: What adjustments can we make to improve the effectiveness of future initiatives?

**Looking Forward:**

- Emerging Needs: Are there any emerging needs in the community that the partnership can address collaboratively?
- New Strategies: Are there any new strategies or approaches we can explore to enhance the partnership's impact?
- Sustainability: How can we ensure the long-term sustainability of the LHD-ECE partnership?

**Additional Considerations:**

- Encourage open and honest feedback from all participants in the debrief.
- Use data and evidence to inform discussions whenever possible.
- Focus on solutions and adaptations rather than simply identifying problems.
- Set clear goals and action items for moving forward after each debrief session.

Asking these types of questions during regularly scheduled debriefs facilitates an intentional approach to improvement and effectiveness that helps partners adapt strategies and ensure continued success in serving children, families, and the community.

# Appendices





# ***Building Collaborative Partnerships Between Local Health Departments and Early Care and Education Programs***

to Support the Health and Well-Being of Children  
and Families in the Community

# Part 1: Benefits of Collaborative Partnerships Between Local Health Departments and Early Care and Education Programs

As a primary unit of governmental health, Local Health Departments (LHD) play a critical role in public health efforts, including serving as public health resources for community families and promoting and delivering appropriate child vaccination schedules. Early care and education (ECE) programs also often serve an important role in public health promotion by helping ensure that children in their care are up-to-date on recommended child vaccinations and serving as a trusted source of health-related information for the families they care for. This is particularly true of ECE programs serving economically disadvantaged families, as these programs are often viewed as key communicators of resources and information regarding young children’s development and health. As both LHD and ECE programs play important roles in public health promotion and the promotion of recommended childhood vaccinations, collaboration between the two entities is vital to ensure families receive appropriate, accurate, and timely information to support the health and well-being of young children and the community.

*Below is a sample logic model demonstrating how LHD and ECE programs can work together to promote health and wellness within the community. There is also a blank logic model that you can complete to fit the specific needs of your own LHD and ECE program collaborative partnership. Below are descriptions of each logic model component along with some guiding questions to think about when completing your logic model. When taken collectively, these steps will lead you through what is needed to complete the work, what actions you want to take, and the impact you hope to create.*

## Inputs

Inputs are *what is needed* to complete your goals. Think about the resources that are required to ensure this is a successful partnership.

- » *What stakeholders should be involved?*
- » *Are there materials needed outside of individuals’ time?*
- » *Do you require funding to ensure the success of the collaboration?*

## Activities

Activities are the *action steps you want to take*.

- » *What steps are required to make the work a success?*
- » *What needs to be done to make this collaborative partnership a reality?*
- » *What sequential actions should be planned for?*

## Outputs

Outputs are the *results of the activities*. Consider what you think will be the direct result of the activities. Generally, outputs are more useful if they are quantifiable.

- » *Identify target numbers. For example, how many products will this activity produce?*
- » *How many individuals will be reached?*



## Processes

Processes are *what is required to sustain success*. It can be easy to plan activities and identify what you want out of a collaborative partnership, but things often break down without a plan to maintain success. In the inputs and activities steps you thought about what needed to happen to set the collaboration up for success, now think about how that success can be maintained.

- » *Is there a plan in place to evaluate the collaboration?*
- » *Will entities involved have an opportunity to check in and make adjustments as needed?*

## Short-term outcomes

Outcomes are separated into both short- and long-term goals. Short-term outcomes are the *immediate change you hope to see*. Think about the reasons behind the work.

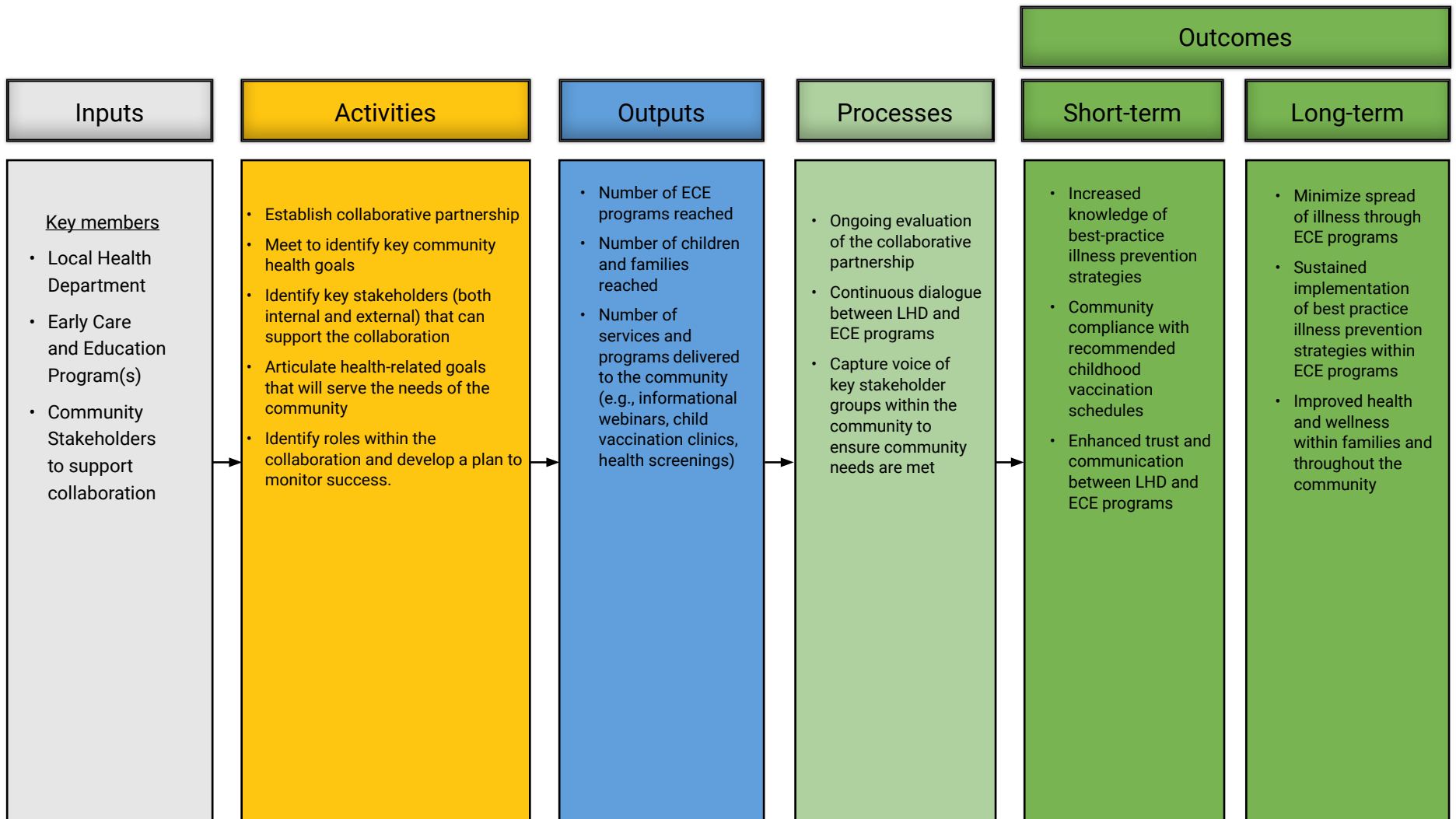
- » *What changes are you hoping to generate in the community?*
- » *What impact are you hoping to have?*
- » *Are there intermittent changes you believe will lead to sustained, large-scale changes?*

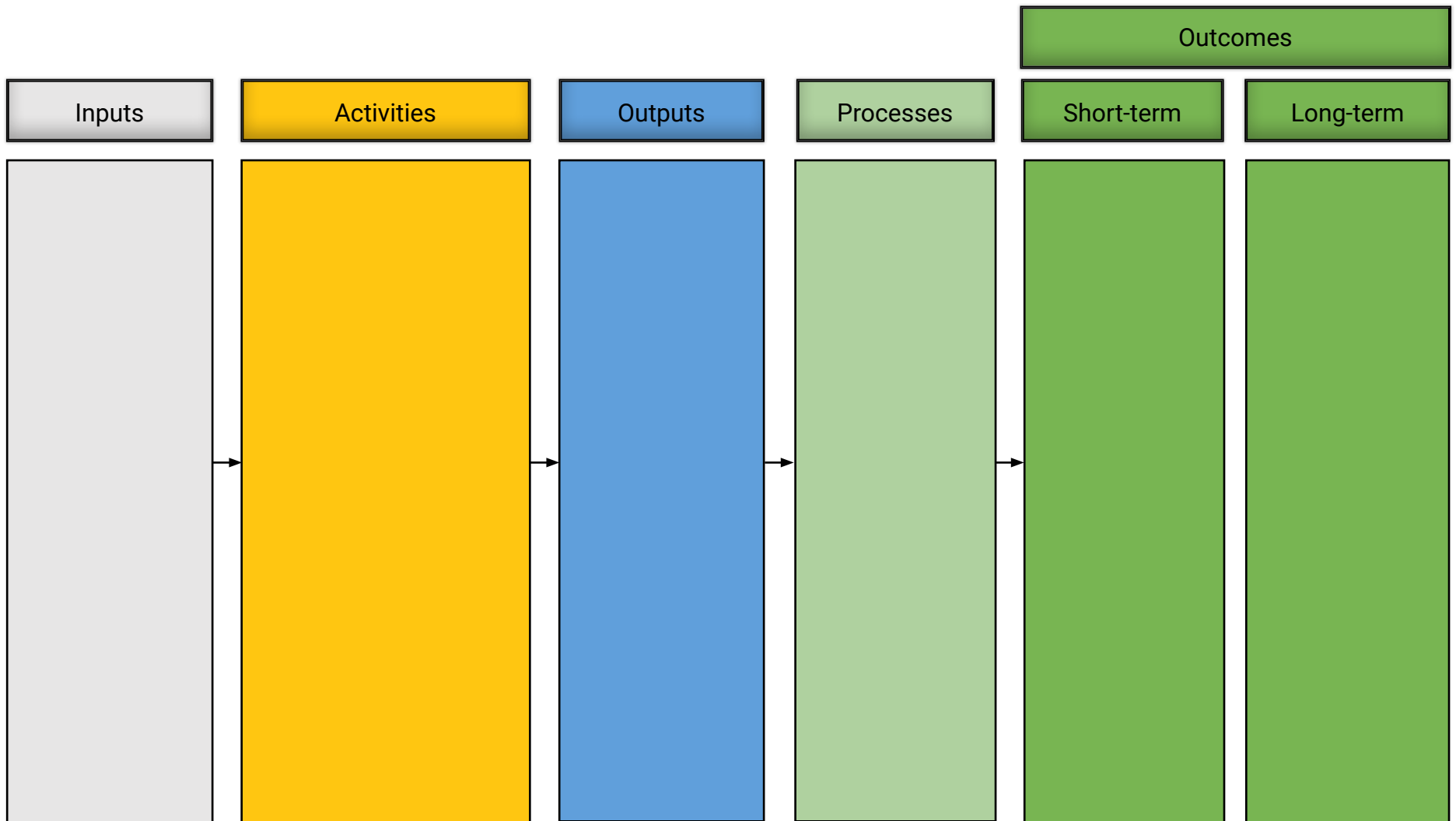
## Long-term outcomes

Long-term outcomes are *big-picture, aspirational goals*. Again, think about why this work is important.

- » *What do you ultimately want to see down the line as a result of this work?*
- » *Are there pressing needs that you hope to meet in the community?*
- » *What purpose does the collaborative partnership serve?*
- » *What do you hope is the end result of this partnership?*







## Part 2: Readiness Assessment for Local Health Department

Before collaborative partnerships can be created and maintained, it is important that the LHD feels they have the capacity to commit to the collaboration. When considering capacity, it can be helpful to consider both the organization's assets (which are internal to the organization) as well as the conditional factors, which are typically outside the organization's immediate influence (e.g., political climate). Both assets and conditional factors can support or hinder the success of any collaborative partnership. In many instances, it may be beneficial to address a lack of capacity (where possible) before initiating the collaborative partnership with an ECE program. Below are two internal tools that can be used to assess the capacity of an LHD and identify areas of strength and opportunity. In no way is the list of assets and conditional factors exhaustive and there are likely others that are relevant for each specific LHD.

*The tool below shows ten indicators of capacity (six assets and four conditional factors). After completing the tool, add up the number of 'yes' responses. While every situation is unique, 7-10 'yes' selections indicate a high level of capacity to pursue a partnership, 5-6 'yes' selections indicate a mixture of strengths and challenges with one or two capacity issues that should be addressed before a partnership can be pursued, and 0-4 'yes' selections likely indicate that capacity issues need to be addressed before a partnership with ECE programs can be pursued.*

<b>Assets</b>	Yes	No	N/A	If capacity is inadequate, what can be done to address the issue?
Are there identified goals on behalf of the LHD (e.g., through a strategic plan)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is there buy-in from the LHD on the benefits of the partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is there an adequate number of staff?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do staff have the required training to support the partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do staff feel they have an understanding of the public health needs of the community?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is there at least one LHD official who will oversee and cultivate the partnership with ECE programs?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Conditional factors</b>				
Is there likely to be buy-in from the community on the benefits of the partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is the current budget promotive of the partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Are there identified stakeholders outside of the LHD who can support the LHD and ECE program partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is the current political climate supportive of the partnership?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

*Please use the tool below to brainstorm other assets and conditional factors that both promote and prohibit the success of an LHD and ECE partnership.*

### **Assets**

What existing assets can be utilized to ensure this partnership is successful?

Are there assets that need to be addressed before the partnership is pursued?

### **Conditional factors**

What conditional factors exist that can help make this partnership successful?

What conditional factors exist that could challenge the success of the partnership?



## Part 3: Steps to Building Partnerships and Communicating Expectations

After establishing that you have the capacity to enter into a collaborative partnership with community ECE programs, it is time to establish the partnership.

*Below is a set of specific steps that you can take to initiate the collaboration, establish the goals of the partnership, and sustain a successful collaboration.*

### 1. Make contact

When beginning a collaborative partnership, it is important to identify who the key partners are. Some communities may have established early childhood working groups that are able to connect the LHD with ECE programs throughout the community. In other instances, you may need to reach out to ECE program directors directly to start the collaborative partnerships. ECE programs vary dramatically in terms of structure and resources. Some programs, like Head Start, have an established infrastructure that makes collaborations easier compared to programs like an in-home child care. However, all programs are likely to benefit from these partnerships, and in many instances, programs that lack established infrastructure and resources may need your support the most.

### 2. Initiate meeting

After connecting with local ECE programs, set up a time for the key stakeholders from each entity to meet. This initial meeting can be used as a “get to know you” session where conversations are had to better understand the strengths of the LHD and ECE program(s) as well as how they can support one another and the needs of the community.

### 3. Brainstorm

This step can be taken in the initial meeting or a subsequent one. Begin to identify the needs of the LHD, ECE program(s), and the community and how these needs can be effectively targeted. Spend time discussing what both the LHD and ECE program(s) are looking to get out of the partnership as well as activities (e.g., health screenings, child vaccination clinics) that can be implemented to support the community.

### 4. Establish goals

After brainstorming needs and activities to address these needs, it is critical to articulate the goals of the collaboration. Ideally, these should be put in writing, specific, and measurable. For example, “LHD will deliver two child vaccination clinics over the summer, and LHD and ECE program will host two fall webinars on preventing childhood illness in September.” The goals can be thought of as being similar to a non-legal MOU and will be useful in keeping all entities on the same page and engaged.





## **5. Establish a mechanism to track progress**

After goals are identified, it is important that an evaluation method and a plan to collect evaluation data are identified to assess if goals are being met. This could be as simple as monitoring the number of families attending a webinar or the number of children attending a co-run health fair. Regardless of the evaluation strategy, it is important that there is an agreed-upon method of establishing whether the goals of the partnership were reached.

## **6. Implement initiatives**

Now is the time to put into action the identified activities and initiatives that the LHD and ECE program(s) want to deliver to the community. This is the step where the hard work and planning is finally put into action!

## **7. Monitor progress**

While initiatives are being delivered, it is crucial that you monitor the success of the initiative systematically, both in terms of assessing if the target audience is reached as well as capturing the experience of community members the activities are intended to serve. While many activities are delivered with the best intentions, the actual success of the activities is not guaranteed and it is important that you are able to identify potential areas of improvement.

## **8. Provide ongoing support and assistance**

Throughout the collaboration it is important that the LHD remains a committed, engaged partner. Questions are likely to arise as a result of the initiatives implemented and ECE programs will have health-related questions that extend beyond any identified goals and activities. Being able to troubleshoot issues and respond to these questions in a timely manner will be critical to the success of the collaborative partnership.

## **9. Prioritize sustainability**

The level of engagement and collaboration within the partnership will influence the initiatives' short-term and long-term success. Think early and often about how the work delivered can be sustained (e.g., Do we need continual funding to support this work? If so, how will funding be attained?). A great indicator of continued success is continual meetings and assessment of project goals. If challenges arise, collaboratively identify how these can be addressed for the long-term health of the partnership.

## **10. Revisit steps as necessary**

The work of collaborative partnerships is rarely "done." The health needs of the community evolve and new initiatives will need to be implemented. In addition, turnover in LHD and ECE programs happens, and new partnerships may need to be formed. It can be helpful to think of these steps as a cyclical process where the steps need to be repeated continuously.



## Part 4: Ongoing Evaluation Tool to Ensure Sustained Success

Now that a collaborative partnership has been built, it is important to continue to monitor and evaluate the dimensions of the relationship to ensure sustained success.

It is recommended that both entities (LHD and ECE program) complete the below evaluation tool at least once a year and meet to discuss strengths and areas of opportunity.

### Internal tool to assess collaborative partnerships between LHD and ECE programs

*Each of the following factors contributes to the success of the collaborative relationship. After reading a description of the factor, indicate how you feel your collaboration is functioning in each area. After rating each area, total your scores.*

#### **Communication:**

The collaboration has open and clear communication. There is an established process for communication between and during meetings.

#### **Shared Focus:**

Shared goals of the collaboration have been agreed upon and goals are well-defined and clearly articulated.

#### **Sustainability:**

The collaboration has a plan for sustaining the collaborative relationship and continuing to support each other.

#### **Evaluation:**

The collaboration has a clear plan to assess progress on shared goals.

#### **Resources:**

All entities of the collaboration have access to the resources needed to ensure a mutually beneficial partnership.

#### **Catalysts:**

There are well-defined reasons for the collaborative partnership to exist.

#### **History:**

The collaboration has a history of working effectively and cooperatively to solve problems.

#### **Connection:**

Members of this collaboration are connected and have established informal and formal communication networks.

#### **Leadership:**

Leadership facilitates and supports the connection between entities and capitalizes on the diversity of experience and expertise.

#### **Community:**

The collaboration understands the needs, people, cultures, and values of the community.



Factor	Strongly Agree (1)	Somewhat Agree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Somewhat Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
Communication	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shared Focus	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainability	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resources	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Catalysts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connection	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note: Tool is adapted with permission from Borden & Perkins, 1999

*After assessing each factor, total your scores to use as a conversation starter. The collaboration will likely have both strengths and areas of opportunity that can be targeted collaboratively. A general guideline would suggest that scores between 0–20 represent an effective, well-functioning collaboration. Scores between 21–39 indicate a mixture of both strengths and challenges. Scores above 40 may suggest refocusing goals and priorities or changes in how the collaboration is structured. As alignment is important to the success of the partnership, it is also important to recognize commonalities and discrepancies in ratings across participating entities. Widely differing opinions on any factor warrant additional discussion to ensure the group can address challenges and move forward together.*

<b>SECTION 1: Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<b>State Early Childhood Advisory Councils</b> The councils provide state coordination and collaboration among all of the early childhood stakeholders to improve education and quality.						
<b>Regulation/Licensing</b> Regulations and licensing agencies have authority to make changes to the policies governing ECE in the state and to enforce those policies.						
<b>Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)</b> QRIS is a statewide system to assess and improve the quality of ECE services. Such systems are typically tiered and may have incentives associated with each tier. QRIS operates in about 25 states; the remaining states are developing one.						
<b>Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)</b> These federal grants to states provide subsidies to families for ECE. Each state must use some of the funds for quality support and technical assistance.						

<b>SECTION 1:</b> <b>Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<p><b>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)</b></p> <p>TANF, administered to states through the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), ACF, provides cash assistance and training for low-income unemployed adults. States have the option to transfer up to 30% of TANF funds to the Child Care Development Fund. <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf</a></p>						
<p><b>Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)</b></p> <p>CACFP is administered to states through the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA. For information go to: <a href="http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program">http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program</a></p>						
<p><b>Head Start and Early Head Start</b></p> <p>The federal Office of Head Start provides grants to local public and private nonprofit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families.</p>						

Adapted by NACCHO from the Obesity Prevention in Early Care and Education: Quick Start Action Guide  
State Obesity Prevention Efforts Targeting the Early Care and Education Setting

<b>SECTION 1: Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<p><b>Tribal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and Tribal Head Start</b></p> <p>Tribes receive Head Start and Tribal CCDF funds separate from states. Tribes may operate their programs differently. Find Tribal CCDF contacts at <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/contact-information/tribal-ccdf-contacts-state">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/contact-information/tribal-ccdf-contacts-state</a></p>						
<p><b>Early Learning Standards/ Foundations</b></p> <p>Early Learning Standards come from state departments of education and address the needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. <a href="http://www.ed.gov/early-learning">http://www.ed.gov/early-learning</a></p>						
<p><b>State Pre-K</b></p> <p>Programs are typically administered through the state department of education and provide education programs to 4-year-olds. The programs may be located in schools and fall under the jurisdiction of school districts.</p>						

<b>SECTION 1:</b> <b>Potential Key ECE Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<p><b>Birth to 3/Early Intervention Programs</b></p> <p>State Birth to 3 Programs are federally-mandated intervention programs (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act— IDEA) to support families of children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three.</p>						
<p><b>Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grants</b></p> <p>These grants to state health departments come from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), HRSA. The grants are intended to help states form collaboratives to implement the Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Health developed in 2002.</p>						
<p><b>Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&amp;Rs)</b></p> <p>These state agencies provide training and support for ECE providers as well as refer families to ECE programs. CCR&amp;Rs have a national association body, Child Care Aware of America that advocates for quality ECE at the national level. <a href="http://www.childcareaware.org/">www.childcareaware.org/</a></p>						

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<b>SECTION 1:</b> <b>Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<p><b>Vocational Schools, Community Colleges, and Universities</b></p> <p>These institutions provide degrees and education credits for certification, as well as continuing education to ECE providers in the state.</p>						
<p><b>Cooperative Extension Service</b></p> <p>These programs operate out of the land-grant universities funded by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USDA. Cooperative Extension conducts research, education, and extension programs that increase the quantity and quality of ECE, afterschool, and teen out-of-school programs. Many cooperative extension offices provide training directly to ECE providers and staff to improve nutrition and physical activity behaviors. <a href="http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/">http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/</a></p>						



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<b>SECTION 1: Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<p><b>American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Early Childhood Champions (EECs)</b></p> <p>The AAP has appointed EECs in each of its state chapters to cultivate and connect leadership on early childhood issues across clinical, community, and policy settings.</p> <p><a href="http://www.aap.org/coec">http://www.aap.org/coec</a></p>						
<p><b>Child Care Health Consultant Network (CCHC)</b></p> <p>Child care health consultants are health professionals once supported by federally funded networks to operate in all states. Some states still support CCHCs either statewide or regionally.</p>						
<p><b>State and County Registration/Certification Systems for ECE Providers</b></p>						

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<b>SECTION 1: Potential Key <u>ECE</u> Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<b>Existing federal grants focused on or including the ECE setting</b>						
<b>Others in your state and locality*</b>						

Adapted by NACCHO from the Obesity Prevention in Early Care and Education: Quick Start Action Guide  
State Obesity Prevention Efforts Targeting the Early Care and Education Setting

<b>SECTION 2:</b> <b>Potential Key Vaccine Uptake Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<b>State or Community-level Health/Wellness grantees with federal or private funding that allows for initiatives targeting the ECE setting</b>  (e.g. CDC, USDA, MCHB, ACF grants.)						
<b>Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program</b>  The VFC Program provides qualifying healthcare practices with vaccines at no costs for persons under the age of 19 who are eligible for Medicaid, uninsured, underinsured, and Alaska Native/American Indian. <a href="#">About the Vaccines for Children (VFC)   VFC Program   CDC</a>						
<b>State Immunization Program</b>  CDC awards 64 state and territories to administer the VFC Program. State Immunization Program websites maintain information about vaccine requirements for ECE settings. <a href="#">Awardee Immunization Websites   CDC</a>						

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<b>SECTION 2:</b> <b>Potential Key Vaccine Uptake Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<b>Immunization Coalition</b> Immunization coalitions are comprised of a variety of community partners, including healthcare and public health professionals, community leaders, parents, businesses, and anyone else who is interested in improving vaccination rates in the region that the coalition serves. <a href="#">National Network of Immunization Coalitions – Communities across the nation working together</a>						
<b>CDC Immunization Champions</b> CDC recognizes immunization champions in every state. <a href="https://www.immunizationmanagers.org/about-aim/awards/champion-awards/">https://www.immunizationmanagers.org/about-aim/awards/champion-awards/</a>						
<b>AAP Chapter Immunization Representative</b> Most AAP Chapters have at least one AAP Chapter Immunization Representative. <a href="#">State Immunization Contacts (aap.org)</a>						

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State Obesity Prevention Efforts Targeting the Early Care and Education Setting

<b>SECTION 2:</b> <b>Potential Key Vaccine Uptake Stakeholders</b>	<b>What are the agency's priorities?</b>	<b>Are you already working with them?</b>	<b>Drill Down: Is there a local partner that administers the state program?</b>	<b>Is the agency doing anything about vaccine uptake? Is it part of an existing coalition?</b>	<b>Any opportunities to leverage resources? Readiness to become involved?</b>	<b>Challenges or barriers to working with this agency? What issues need to be addressed?</b>
<b>Indian Health Services (IHS) National Immunization Program</b>  The IHS National Immunization Program represents a longstanding partnership between IHS and CDC to effectively support and strengthen IHS and Tribal Immunization programs across the country. <a href="#">Immunization and Vaccine-Preventable Diseases   Division of Epidemiology and Disease Prevention (ihs.gov)</a>						
<b>Governor's Council/Task Force on Maternal and Child Health</b>						
<b>Others in your state or locality*</b>						

**\*Other agencies and organizations to consider engaging as partners in early childhood vaccine uptake opportunities:**

- Departments of child and family services
- Labor and workforce development agencies
- State chapters of the Division for Early Childhood
- Organizations serving children with special medical needs
- Organizations serving migrant and other underserved populations
- ECE advocacy and support networks
- ECE improvement and family support networks
- ECE information clearinghouses
- Family resource centers
- Cooperative educational services
- Child maltreatment prevention organizations
- Community libraries
- News media
- Business Leaders
- Faith- and Community-Based Organizations
- Philanthropic organizations
- Hospitals
- Pharmacies

## Appendix C: Partnership Engagement Plan

### Understanding the Partnership Engagement Plan

This tool is designed to help your LHD systematically plan and manage your engagement with various ECE stakeholders throughout the course of your partnership project. It serves as a roadmap to ensure you're effectively communicating, collaborating, and building strong relationships with key partners.

### Step-by-Step Instructions

- Identify Potential Partners:

### Brainstorm a list of all the ECE stakeholders who could be relevant to your project. This might include:

- Specific ECE programs (child care centers, Head Start programs, etc.)
- CCR&Rs (Child Care Resource and Referral agencies)
- CCHCs (Child Care Health Consultants)
- Other community-based organizations serving young children and families
- Relevant state or local agencies (e.g., Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services)
- Complete the Matrix for Each Partner:
- Potential Partner: Enter the name of the organization or individual you are considering partnering with.
- Area(s) of Interest: Select the relevant areas from the dropdown list (e.g., Immunizations and Vaccinations, Health Screenings, Family Engagement) or choose "Other" and specify in the "Notes" column.
- Phase of Project: Indicate which phase(s) of your project this partner will be involved in:
  - Planning
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation
  - Various (if they'll be involved throughout)
- Engagement Approach: Choose the most appropriate level of engagement for this partner:
  - Inclusive: Request input & feedback
  - Consultative: Seek expertise
  - Collaborative: Work closely for the duration of the project and beyond
- Communication Method(s) and Timing: Specify how and how often you'll communicate with this partner (e.g., monthly in-person meetings, quarterly newsletters, ad-hoc emails).
- Activity or Task: Describe the specific activities or tasks this partner will be involved in.
- ECE Responsibility: If applicable, list the specific responsibilities that the ECE partner will take on for this activity or task.
- LHD Responsibility: List the specific responsibilities that your LHD will take on.
- Anticipated Barriers: Identify any potential challenges or obstacles that might affect the partnership with this stakeholder.
- Notes: Use this space to add any additional context, considerations, or contact information for this partner.

- Review and Revise Regularly:
  - The Partnership Engagement Plan is a dynamic document. As your project progresses, revisit and update the plan to reflect any changes in stakeholder involvement, communication strategies, or anticipated barriers.
  - Use the plan as a tool for ongoing communication and collaboration with your partners.

**Tips for Effective Use:**

- **Be Thorough:** Take the time to carefully consider each potential partner and their role in your project. The more detailed your plan, the better prepared you'll be for successful collaboration.
- **Be Flexible:** Partnerships evolve over time, so be prepared to adjust your engagement plan as needed.
- **Communicate Openly:** Share the plan with your partners and use it as a basis for ongoing discussions about roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Following these steps and using the Partnership Engagement Plan effectively will help you to build strong, collaborative relationships with ECE and maximize the impact of your efforts to improve child health and well-being in your community.



# Partnership Engagement Plan

Instructions: Use this document to identify potential community partners and co-create a plan for collaboration.

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Potential Partner</b>	<i>Enter the partner's name:</i>
<b>Area(s) of Interest</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Immunizations and Vaccinations <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Immunization Records Management <input type="checkbox"/> Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Health Screenings <input type="checkbox"/> Communicable Disease Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Eating Education <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Activity Promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<b>Phase of Project</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Various
<b>Engagement Approach</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive: Request input & feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Consultative: Seek expertise <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative: Work closely for duration of project and beyond
<b>Communication Method(s) and Timing</b>	<i>Type of engagement:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Emails <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual meetings <input type="checkbox"/> In-person meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Etc. _____ <i>Timing:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Ad-hoc <input type="checkbox"/> Etc. _____
<b>Activity or Task</b>	<i>What activities will directly involve the identified partner?</i>
<b>ECE Responsibility</b>	<i>Which activities and/or tasks will be the responsibility of the ECE partner?</i>
<b>LHD Responsibility</b>	<i>Which activities and/or tasks will be the responsibility of the LHD?</i>
<b>Anticipated Barriers</b>	<i>What are the known and potential barriers to this partnership?</i>
<b>Notes</b>	

## Partnership Engagement Plan

Instructions: Use this document to identify potential community partners and co-create a plan for collaboration.

Organization Name:

Sunshine City Local Health Department

<b>Potential Partner</b>	Enter the partner's name: Sunshine CCR&R Agency
<b>Area(s) of Interest</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immunizations and Vaccinations <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Immunization Records Management <input type="checkbox"/> Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Health Screenings <input type="checkbox"/> Communicable Disease Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Eating Education <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Activity Promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<b>Phase of Project</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Various
<b>Engagement Approach</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive: Request input & feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Consultative: Seek expertise <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaborative: Work closely for duration of project and beyond
<b>Communication Method(s) and Timing</b>	Type of engagement: <input type="checkbox"/> Emails <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual meetings <input type="checkbox"/> In-person meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Etc. _____ Timing: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Ad-hoc <input type="checkbox"/> Etc. _____ Monthly in-person meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, virtual meetings on the third Tuesday of the month, emails and phone calls as needed.
<b>Activity or Task</b>	What activities will directly involve the identified partner? Sunshine CCR&R and ABC County Health Department will collaborate to increase vaccinations for children attending child care and their families.
<b>ECE Responsibility</b>	Which activities and/or tasks will be the responsibility of the ECE partner? Share information about vaccination services provided by the health department, recommended vaccination schedules, and dates and times for vaccinations.
<b>LHD Responsibility</b>	Which activities and/or tasks will be the responsibility of the LHD? Provide information to Sunshine CCR&R to distribute to local child care providers and administer vaccinations to children and family members.
<b>Anticipated Barriers</b>	What are the known and potential barriers to this partnership? Transportation, vaccine hesitancy, dates/times for working families.
<b>Notes</b>	

## Appendix D: Template for Letter of Collaboration & Sample Letter

Template Letter of Collaboration for [Name of Local Health Department] and [Name of ECE Entity]

### Introduction:

This Letter of Collaboration (“Letter”) outlines the collaborative efforts of [Name of Local Health Department] (“LHD”) and [Name of ECE Entity] (“ECE Entity”) to promote the health and well-being of children enrolled in the ECE Program.

### Purpose:

The LHD and ECE entity agree to collaborate on the following:

- [List specific areas of collaboration, e.g., joint professional development, sharing health resources, communication strategies for families]

### Collaboration Activities:

The parties may undertake the following activities in support of this collaboration:

- [List potential activities, e.g., joint training sessions, resource development, communication campaigns]

### Roles and Responsibilities:

- The LHD agrees to: [List LHD’s responsibilities, e.g., provide expertise, develop resources]
- The ECE Entity agrees to: [List ECE entity responsibilities, e.g., designate a point of contact, participate in joint activities]

### Communication:

The parties agree to communicate regularly regarding the collaboration. This may include:

- [Specify preferred communication methods, e.g., monthly meetings, email exchanges]

### Term and Termination:

This Letter will be effective as of the date of last signature below and will continue until terminated by either party upon written notice to the other party.

### Disclaimer:

This Letter is not intended to be a legally binding contract and does not create any legally enforceable obligations between the parties.

**Signatures:**

[Name of ECE Entity]

Authorized Signature: [Name and Title]

Date: [Date]

[Name of Local Health Department/Other Public Health Entity]

Authorized Signature: [Name and Title]

Date: [Date]

**Additional Considerations:**

You can modify this template to include additional sections if needed, such as:

- Confidentiality (if sensitive information will be shared)
- Dispute Resolution (informal process for addressing any disagreements)

While this Letter is not intended to be legally binding, it demonstrates a clear commitment from both parties to collaborate.

## Sample Letter of Collaboration

Sample Letter of Collaboration for Springfield Local Health Department and Sunshine Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency

### Introduction:

This Letter of Collaboration (“Letter”) outlines the collaborative efforts of the Springfield Local Health Department (“LHD”) and Sunshine Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency (“CCR&R”) to promote the health and well-being of children in the community.

### Purpose:

The CCR&R and LHD agree to collaborate on the following:

- Promoting healthy practices: Develop and implement strategies to promote healthy eating habits, physical activity, and good hygiene practices within the CCR&R.
- Enhancing communication with families: Collaborate on creating educational materials and communication strategies to inform families about childhood health topics and available resources.
- Supporting professional development: Provide joint professional development opportunities for staff on topics related to child health, development, and early identification of potential concerns.
- Sharing resources: Share resources and information related to children’s health and well-being between the CCR&R and LHD.

### Collaboration Activities:

The parties may undertake the following activities in support of this collaboration:

- Joint training sessions: Organize workshops for CCR&R staff on topics like healthy food preparation, promoting physical activity in young children, and recognizing signs of developmental delays.
- Resource development: Collaborate on developing handouts, brochures, and online resources for families on relevant child health topics.
- Communication campaigns: Partner on creating and disseminating communication campaigns to raise awareness about healthy habits and available community resources for families.
- Data sharing (de-identified): Share de-identified data on health indicators (e.g., immunization rates) to monitor program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

The LHD agrees to:

- Provide expertise and guidance on promoting healthy practices in child care settings.
- Collaborate on developing resources and communication materials for families.
- Offer training sessions for CCR&R staff on child health and development topics.
- Facilitate connections with relevant community resources for families.

The CCR&R agrees to:

- Designate a point of contact to coordinate collaboration activities with the LHD.
- Participate in joint training sessions and professional development opportunities.
- Implement strategies to promote healthy practices within the CCR&R.
- Share relevant information and de-identified data with the LHD, as agreed upon.

**Communication:**

The parties agree to communicate regularly regarding the collaboration. This may include:

- Monthly meetings between designated points of contact from the CCR&R and LHD.
- Bi-annual review meetings to assess progress and discuss future initiatives.
- Regular email communication to share updates and resources

**Confidentiality:**

In the course of this collaboration, the parties may share certain confidential information. Both parties agree to:

- Use confidential information only for the purposes of this collaboration and not for any other purpose.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of such information.
- Not disclose confidential information to any third party without the prior written consent of the other party

**Dispute Resolution:**

The parties agree to use good faith efforts to resolve any disputes or disagreements that may arise under this Letter. In the event of a dispute, the parties will first attempt to resolve the matter through informal discussions between designated points of contact. If the dispute cannot be resolved informally within 30 days, either party may terminate this Letter upon written notice to the other party.

**Term and Termination:**

This Letter will be effective as of the date of last signature below and will continue until terminated by either party upon written notice to the other party.

**Disclaimer:**

This Letter is not intended to be a legally binding contract and does not create any legally enforceable obligations between the parties.

**Signatures:**

Sunshine Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency

Authorized Signature: [Name and Title of CCR&R Director]

Date: [Date]

Springfield Local Health Department

Authorized Signature: [Name and Title of LHD Representative]

Date: [Date]

## Appendix E: Additional Ways to Celebrate and Promote Successes

Celebrate and promote the successes of your LHD-ECE partnership! Sharing accomplishments both internally (with your team/organization) and externally (with the public) helps:

- Maintain motivation
- Strengthen relationships
- Gain support
- Ensure long-term sustainability

### Introduction:

Before any public promotion, review your organization's policies on social media, press releases, and website updates. Following these guidelines will help you avoid potential issues.

### Strategies for Celebrating and Promoting Success:

Sharing your partnership's achievements is crucial for maintaining momentum and gaining community support. Consider these strategies:

- **Craft Success Stories:** Capture impactful stories showcasing the partnership's positive outcomes. These can be used in various ways, including newsletters, presentations, annual reports, and more. Utilize the provided templates for guidance.
- **Issue Press Releases:** Announce significant milestones and achievements to local media outlets. A press release template is included for your reference.
- **Leverage Social Media:** Share positive news and success stories on both the ECE program's and LHD's social media platforms. Find sample posts below for inspiration.
- **Update Website Content:** Dedicate a section on both websites to highlight the partnership's accomplishments and impact.

These strategies will help you effectively celebrate successes, boost morale, and garner wider recognition for the positive impacts your partnership is making on children, families, and the community.



## Template and Sample for a Success Story

### Headline:

[Partnership Name] Celebrates Success in [Area of achievement]!

### Body:

- Briefly describe the success achieved by the LHD-ECE partnership.
- Highlight the collaborative efforts of both partners.
- Quantify the impact whenever possible (e.g., increased immunization rates, improved health outcomes).
- Include a quote from a representative of both the ECE program and the LHD expressing their satisfaction with the achievement.
- Conclude by emphasizing the partnership's ongoing commitment to serving children and families in the community.

## Sample Success Story

### Shining a Light on Health: LHD-ECE Partnership Boosts Childhood Immunization Rates

[City, State] – [Date] – A collaborative effort between the [Name of Local Health Department] (LHD) and the [Name of ECE Entity] is proving successful in increasing childhood immunization rates within the community. This partnership, launched in [Year], has resulted in a [Percentage] increase in full immunization rates among children enrolled in the ECE program within a period of [Timeframe].

“We are thrilled to see such positive results from our partnership with the LHD,” says [Name], [Title] at the [Name of ECE Program]. “Ensuring all our children are up-to-date on their immunizations is critical to protecting their health and well-being, and this program is making a significant difference.”

The LHD-ECE partnership has implemented a multi-faceted approach to address vaccine hesitancy and increase access to immunizations. Key strategies include:

- **Educational Workshops:** LHD healthcare staff conducted informative workshops for ECE program staff and families, addressing common concerns and debunking myths about childhood immunizations.
- **On-site Vaccination Clinics:** The LHD supported convenient on-site vaccination clinics at the ECE program, eliminating transportation barriers and making it easier for families to get their children immunized.
- **Flexible Appointment Scheduling:** The partnership offered flexible appointment scheduling options to accommodate working parents’ needs.
- **Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Outreach Materials:** LHD materials were translated into multiple languages to ensure clear communication with diverse families.

“This partnership exemplifies the power of collaboration in safeguarding public health,” says [Name], [Title] at the [Name of Local Health Department]. “By working together with the ECE program, we are reaching more children and ensuring they are protected from preventable diseases.”

The success of this initiative highlights the importance of collaboration between ECE programs and LHDs. Combining expertise and resources can effectively address the health needs of children and families within the community. The partnership between [Name of ECE Program] and the [Name of LHD] serves as a model for other communities seeking to improve childhood immunization rates and promote the overall health and well-being of their youngest residents.

## Press Release Template

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### [Contact Information]

- Name: [Your Name]
- Title: [Your Title]
- Email: [Your Email Address]

#### [Headline]

[City, State] – [Date] – [Brief and attention-grabbing introduction to the press release]

#### [Body Paragraph 1]

- Provide more details about the newsworthy event or announcement.
- Who is involved? What happened? Why is this newsworthy?
- Include quotes from key figures involved (optional).

#### [Body Paragraph 2 (Optional)]

- Offer additional context or information to support the main points.
- This could include statistics, background information, or future plans.

#### [Body Paragraph 3 (Optional)]

- Include a call to action (optional).
- Tell readers what you want them to do after reading the press release (e.g., visit a website, attend an event).

#### [About [Your Organization]]

- Briefly describe your organization and its mission (2-3 sentences).

#### [Social Media Links (Optional)]

- Include links to your organization's social media profiles (e.g., Facebook, Twitter/X).

#### Note:

- Replace the bracketed information with your specific details.
- Adjust the length and content of the press release to fit the specific news you are announcing.

## Appendix F: Additional Resources

### I. Data and Assessment Resources

1. National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO): Utilize NACCHO's online directory to find your LHD.  
<https://www.naccho.org/membership/lhd-directory>
2. Child Care Resource and Referral organizations  
<https://www.childcareaware.org/about/child-care-resource-referral>
3. Administration on Children and Families Child Care Health Consultants page.  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/health-services-management/article/resources-child-care-health-consultants>
4. Child Care Aware® of America's Technical Assistance Request Form  
<https://www.childcareaware.org/technical-assistance-request>
5. Child Care Aware® of America's (CCAoA) GIS map, United States Pediatric Public Health & Early Care & Education Infrastructure  
<https://ccaoa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=3c70da56823b49679d253c353ee62242>
6. Child Care Aware® of America's (CCAoA) Story Map and Community Profile Worksheet  
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0f33d5fd860a48f68970542d2bf62171>
7. The Community Tool Box, a public service developed and managed by the University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development  
[ctb.ku.edu](http://ctb.ku.edu)

### II. Planning and Facilitation

1. Meeting Agenda Template  
Examples:
  - Build the Foundation: [https://buildthefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Collaboration-Agendas\\_Final.pdf](https://buildthefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Collaboration-Agendas_Final.pdf)
  - King County: <https://ydekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Partnership-Meeting-Topics-and-Sample-Agenda.pdf>
2. Inclusive Facilitation for Social Change or Conducting Effective Meetings
  - Source: University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development
  - [ctb.ku.edu](http://ctb.ku.edu)

### III. Communication and Health Equity Resources

1. Communication Planning Tools
  - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/fundedprograms/1807/communication\\_planning.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/fundedprograms/1807/communication_planning.htm)
2. Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication
  - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - [https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Health\\_Equity.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Health_Equity.html)
3. Roots of Health Inequity
  - Source: National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
  - <https://rootsofhealthinequity.org/course-previews/building-narrative-power>
4. Early Care and Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary
  - Source: Child Care Aware® of America & National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2023). *Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary*.
  - [https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/2023%20ECE%20Training%20and%20TA%20Glossary%20\(7\).pdf](https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/2023%20ECE%20Training%20and%20TA%20Glossary%20(7).pdf)
5. Community Guide to Advance Health Information Equity
  - Source: Network of the National Library of Medicine
  - <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/159de9cbd0704babb60093836e988798>

### IV. Goal Setting and Collaboration

1. The Family and Community Partnerships Reflection Tool for Family-Facing Professionals
  - Source: Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center
  - <https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/resources/reflectiontool>
2. Inclusive Facilitation for Social Change or Conducting Effective Meetings
  - Source: The Management Center
  - <https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/smartie-goals-worksheet>
3. Community Collaboration Toolkit
  - Source: Communities of Opportunity
  - <https://www.coopartnerships.org/comm-collab-toolkit>
4. The Collaboration Spectrum
  - Source: Tamarack Institute
  - <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/interactive-tools/collaboration-spectrum-tool> and <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/articles/the-collaborative-spectrum-revisited>

## 5. Planning Accessible Meetings and Events

- Source: Harvard University Disability Resources
- <https://accessibility.harvard.edu/event-planning>

## V. Foundational Resources

### 1. Building Collaborative Partnerships Between Local Health Departments and Early Care and Education Programs to Support the Health and Well-Being of Children and Families in the Community

- Source: Better Kid Care
- <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare>

### 2. Value of Investing in Social Determinants of Health Toolkit: Grounding Value in Authentic Partnerships

- Source: Institute for Medicaid Innovation
- [https://medicaidinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/IMI-SDOH-Toolkit\\_Authentic-Partnerships\\_Sept-2023.pdf](https://medicaidinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/IMI-SDOH-Toolkit_Authentic-Partnerships_Sept-2023.pdf)