Partner Summit
October 14-16, 2014
Motif Hotel
Seattle

Tuesday, October 14
Pre-conference day

1:00 – 4 pm  Registration (4th Floor)

1:00  One-on-One Consultations (Seattle Ballroom)

1:30  Early Childhood Communications Working Group (Capitol Hill)
Meet with other communications professionals working on early childhood issues for state and national organizations. Discuss strategic communication plans and priorities for 2015, including messaging strategies around child care. Hear about ways to use video and infographics to share your messages with key audiences. Brainstorm new campaign and social media ideas with others working on early childhood development.

1:40  I-LABS Tour (buses depart from the hotel lobby)
Summit participants who signed up for the tour in advance will have a unique opportunity to see the Institute for Learning & Brain Science’s state-of-the-art learning and cognition laboratory.

2:00  Alliance 101 (Belltown)
If you are new to the Alliance, or want more information about things like how to distinguishing between technical assistance and rapid response, join us for an introduction to the resources available to you. Everyone is welcome.

3:30  FFYF 101 (Belltown)
Through information, advocacy, and outreach, the First Five Years Fund (FFYF) works with policymakers, experts, business leaders, and advocates to advance federal investment in quality early childhood education for disadvantaged children from birth to age five. FFYF works in a nonpartisan manner, using a variety of communication efforts, policy supports, and advocacy to advance policies that will increase access to quality early childhood programs. Participants will discuss the range of strategies that FFYF has found effective at the federal level, and identify how FFYF can serve as a resource to those partners participating in the meeting.
4:45  **Buses depart hotel for Gates Foundation**

***Conference nametags will be required to enter the reception***

5:00  **Welcome Reception**
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
500 5th Ave North, Seattle, WA 98109

6:45  **Buses depart Gates Foundation for hotel**

**Wednesday, October 15**

7:00 am  **Registration**

8:00  **Breakfast, Consultations, and Networking Time** (Emerald I)

**Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge State Breakfast** (Emerald III)
Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge states are invited to share plans and challenges to sustaining ELC work after federal funding ends.

9:00  **Welcome and Opening Plenary**  (Seattle Ballroom)

*Lisa Klein, Alliance for Early Success*
*Diana Mendley Rauner, Ounce of Prevention Fund*

**Scientific Foundations: The Importance of Interactions During Children’s Earliest Years**
*Dr. Patricia Kuhl, Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS), University of Washington*

Children are born learning. From their earliest interactions with parents and caregivers, children are developing the skills that serve as the building blocks for later success. This plenary focuses on the importance of interactions and early relationships as the context that fosters all learning. Through a discussion of young children’s language learning, Dr. Kuhl will highlight the latest research on early brain development, critical periods, bilingual language development, and underscore the importance of children’s earliest social interactions for all learning.

10:30  **Break**

11:00  **Breakout Sessions**

**Continuing the Conversation on Scientific Foundations - Implications for State Policy** (Emerald II)
*Patricia Kuhl, UW Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences*
Continue the conversation with Dr. Kuhl following the plenary presentation. This will be an opportunity to go deeper into topics covered in the plenary and for the audience to bring up policy ideas and explore the application of the science to policy issues that are in play in your states.
Challenges and Innovations to Informing Innovative Child Care Policy
(First Hill) Claire Dudley Chavez, New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership; Bill Jaeger, Colorado Children’s Campaign; Carey McCann, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Molly Yost, Clayton Early Learning
Advocates from New Mexico and Colorado will share their recent efforts to identify and advance innovative child care policies in their states. They will compare and contrast the policies being developed (New Mexico) and implemented (Colorado), the process they used to identify and advance the policies, and how politics have shaped their work and strategies.

Building a High-Quality Early Childhood Workforce (Capitol Hill)
Fran Kipnis and Marcy Whitebook, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment; Alison Lutton and Adele Robinson, National Association for the Education of Young Children; Joyce Weiner, Illinois Ounce of Prevention Fund
The early childhood workforce plays a pivotal role in the delivery of quality services, and the achievement of better outcomes for young children. Join a moderated discussion with national experts who will explore workforce supports that can advance program quality, discuss the role of higher education, and share new advocacy resources.

Children with Challenging Behaviors: Practice and Policy (Pioneer)
Gail Joseph, University of Washington College of Education
How can we help teachers and coaches to feel competent in identifying effective strategies for preventing and addressing children with challenging behaviors - especially in the context of high stakes quality rating systems? Hear stories and data from child care centers grappling with this issue and discuss answers to questions such as: What does challenging behavior look like in the program setting? How to work towards improvements to support teachers and children? Dr. Joseph will share insights and practical applications from her work in Washington and beyond that point to promising policy innovations.

Science-Based Innovation to Achieve Breakthrough Outcomes For Vulnerable Young Children (Belltown)
Jason Gortney, Children’s Home Society of Washington; Juliet Morrison, Washington Department of Early Learning; Holly Schindler, University of Washington; Tassy Warren (moderator), Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University
Members of the Frontiers of Innovation network will share how they are co-designing and testing science-based strategies aimed at improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged children in Washington State. Learn about their strengths-based video coaching program for caregivers in the Early Head Start home visiting program, as well as plans to scale this strategy statewide.

12:15 pm  Lunch, Consultations, and Networking Time (Emerald I)

Luncheon for Investors (Emerald III)
Investors will provide expertise and input based on work they are leading, and share ideas about how we can collectively have the greatest impact on
advocacy and state policies that improve the lives of vulnerable young children. (invitation only)

1:30 Breakout sessions

**Culture Counts: How to Effectively Engage Parents from Different Cultures** (First Hill)  
*Manica Ramos, Child Trends; Andreina Velasco, Oregon Children’s Institute; Karina Armenta, Early Boyles Elementary School, Oregon*  
Research and practice come together in this session, with a focus on how to effectively engage Black and Latino families in supporting the development of their young children. Hear research highlights from Child Trends, and learn from The Children’s Institute as they work to engage parents in communities and classrooms.

**Vroom: A New Initiative to Build the Next Generation of Brains** (Belltown)  
*Megan Wyatt, Bezos Family Foundation*  
Inspired by recent advances in neuroscience, the Bezos Family Foundation has worked with scientists, community leaders, families and consumer brands to create Vroom, a new initiative empowering parents and caregivers to play a proactive role in their children’s early brain development. Vroom was designed to layer onto the moments that caregivers already share with their children, providing fun and easy ways to help build their brains. This session will highlight key take-aways from the pilot project, discuss plans for scale and solicit feedback from participants on ways to ensure its success.

**Strategizing for Infants and Toddlers in Michigan** (Capitol Hill)  
*John Bebow, Center for Michigan; Peter Pratt, Public Sector Consultants*  
Building on their successful strategy to increase funding for state pre-k, Michigan’s business leaders, advocates, and policy advisors are turning their attention to infants and toddlers. Hear about the research, statistics, and feedback they received in a year-long process to inform their infant-toddler policy strategy for the FY15 legislative agenda. Share the challenges your state faces in making infants and toddlers a political priority.

**The Cost of Quality: Lessons from the Field** (Pioneer)  
*Louise Stoney, Opportunities Exchange; Katherine Freeman, New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership; Melanie Bronfin, Louisiana Policy Institute for Children; Juliet Morrison, Washington Department of Early Learning*  
The price tag to deliver high-quality child care can often end a conversation before it begins. Hear how three states are educating policymakers on the cost of quality, and advancing the conversation using cost modeling. Who did they engage, how did they communicate cost information, and what happened as a result?

2:45 Break
3:15  **Plenary Session** (Seattle Ballroom)

*Policymakers’ Perspectives: Seizing Opportunities to Advance Early Learning*

*Representative Ruth Kagi* (WA)
*Senator Steve Litzow* (WA)
*Former Representative Rep. Roger Eddy,* (IL)

*Introduction: Elliot Regenstein, Ounce of Prevention Fund*
*Facilitator: Steffanie Clothier, Alliance for Early Success*

Let’s talk about politics, policy and what it takes to move the needle for young children. Legislative leaders will share what’s on their minds, where they see challenges, and give us advice about the work ahead.

4:30  **Taste of Seattle Reception** (3rd Floor)

Enjoy the tastes and sounds of Seattle after a full day of learning! Share new insights, re-connect with colleagues, and forge new friendships.

6:00  Meeting adjourns for the day. Dinner on your own.

**Thursday, October 16**

8:00 am  **Breakfast, Consultation, and Networking Time** (Emerald I)

**Federal Policy Advocacy Breakfast** (Emerald III)
First Five Years Fund and National Women’s Law Center will provide brief updates on what is expected from Congress in the coming year. All state and national partners are welcome to join the conversation and share their insights on key issues facing advocates in the months ahead.

9:00  **Breakout Sessions**

**What's next for QRIS? Focusing on Teaching and Learning to Improve Quality** (First Hill)
*Debi Mathias, BUILD Initiative QRIS NLN; Sheila Smith, National Center for Children in Poverty*

Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) are among the key policy drivers with potential to influence children’s learning, especially when new public investments lead to the expansion of *high quality* early learning settings. National experts will lead a discussion about emerging ideas for strengthening the positive impact of QRIS on teaching and learning in these settings, including Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) strategies. Bring your questions and ideas to this discussion of “what’s next,” and learn about new resources for policy planning and advocacy.
Changing the Conversation: Integrating Racial Equity into Advocacy and Policy (Capitol Hill)
Dan Torres, Thrive by Five Washington; Evette Jasper, Washington Department of Early Learning; Dave Edie, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
Advocates and agency administrators in Washington and Wisconsin are committed to using an equity lens in all of their work. Learn about how they are framing the conversation, and what they are doing to arrive at a common vision and road map for advancing racial equity. Hear their experiences in getting beyond the data and engaging stakeholders in a collective effort to narrow disparities based on race, culture, and ethnicity.

“P-3” Alignment: Whose Job Is It Anyway? (Belltown)
Albert Wat and Amanda Szekely, National Governors Association; Joyce Weiner, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Amy O’Leary, Strategies for Children
Aligning states’ early learning and early elementary goals, policies, and strategies is “all the rage” these days, but whose job is it to define this work, do it, monitor progress, and keep it going? Panelists will share their reflections from a year-long project that focused on improving state policies on learning standards, assessments, and/or teacher evaluation from a birth-through-3rd grade perspective. The discussion will include successes, challenges, and lessons learned about how to create “space and time” for alignment work, cultivate ownership and leadership, and promote sustainability.

Sustaining and Integrating Home Visiting Services (Pioneer)
Maria Gehl, MIECHV TA Centers at ZERO TO THREE; Marcy Miller, Thrive by Five Washington; Claire Dudley Chavez, New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership; Gail Nourse, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Barbara Gebhard (moderator), ZERO TO THREE
Home visiting services have grown through the support of the Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grants. Learn about how states are integrating home visiting into other early childhood systems, developing financing strategies to sustain these services, and tracking outcomes to demonstrate effectiveness.

10:15 Break
10:45 Breakout Sessions

Integrating Health into an Early Childhood Policy Agenda (Pioneer)
Carrie Hanlon, National Academy for State Health Policy; Hannah Matthews, Center on Law and Social Policy; Sheila Smith, National Center for Children in Poverty; Marina Merrill, Oregon Children’s Institute
Good health is the foundation for positive early childhood outcomes, and multiple policies fit perfectly at the intersection of health, family support, and early learning policy. Hear from four partners who are working across these intersections to promote good health and mental health.
Keeping the Momentum: Advocacy and Communications Innovations (Belltown) Helen Blank, National Women’s Law Center; Mindy Binderman, Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students

From hula-hoops, to Chutes and Ladders, to town hall meetings and twitter storms - hear about innovative ways to create your own newsworthy events, and using social media to keep the drumbeat going on the importance of early learning. Share your own examples of how you keep up the momentum in your state, as well as your challenges to sustaining attention.

Preschool Expansion Implementation: Learning from New York City & Michigan (First Hill)
Susan Broman, Michigan Department of Education, and Nancy Kolben, Center for Children’s Initiatives, New York City

Many states and localities are rapidly expanding preschool and many more plan to join the ranks with help from the new federal Preschool Development & Expansion grants. What is necessary to take good programs to scale? How does preschool expansion help to build a continuum of high-quality services for children birth to age 8? How can we be sure to advocate that these conditions are in place prior to the expansion? Join us for a dialogue about implementation issues New York City and Michigan are facing in their rapidly expanding efforts to enroll thousands more children in high-quality preschool. Bring questions and get advice from early childhood leaders about how to address the biggest implementation challenges to expanding preschool in your state or community.

Supporting Children Birth to Third Grade: How States Can Support Local Alignment (Capitol Hill)
Samantha Aigner-Treworgy, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Ceil Zalkind, Advocates for Children of New Jersey; Leanne Barrett, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT; Kimberley Patillo Brownson, Advancement Project

Aligning the educational continuum for children birth-to-eight is critical to ensure that progress achieved in high quality early childhood programs can be sustained through elementary school. The design of state-level policies can help support local level alignment efforts, an essential factor to making sure communities can be successful in these initiatives. The panel will highlight specific approaches three states have taken to achieve the goal of fostering alignment in local educational systems. Through this discussion, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of specific birth-to-eight alignment strategies they can utilize to ensure a positive impact on communities and the children they serve.

12 pm Meeting Adjourns

Lunch, Consultations, and Networking Time (Emerald I)