5 Years of Learning


Santa Clara CARES
Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards
Introduction

The purpose of this report is to document the first five years of implementation of Santa Clara CARES’ (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) incentive program for early educators. The report outlines an overview of the strategies, successes, and challenges E3 Institute-Advancing Excellence in Early Education-WestEd has experienced in offering professional development and educational opportunities to early educators working in Santa Clara County. Santa Clara CARES represents E3 Institute’s largest investment in the early education workforce and is viewed by other counties as a model program largely because of its collaborative approach and its use of technology to inform the evolution of the program.
Dear Colleagues in Early Education,

Imagine that for many years you envisioned a support program that could expand and retain a highly qualified child development workforce in our county, but funding is in question. Now imagine that funding is awarded that provides the opportunity to establish a professional development institute to facilitate an incentive program to reward educational attainment for those who teach and care for our youngest children.

We imagined all this and in 2001 FIRST 5 Santa Clara County awarded a grant to create WestEd’s E3 Institute to administer the Santa Clara CARES program as part of the statewide CARES initiative. Fast forward to five years later when we find ourselves looking back at five amazing years of learning because of the opportunity to become better acquainted with the early education workforce in our county.

We launched Santa Clara CARES with a belief that we would orient, guide, and support early educators to enable them to expand their education and professional development. Looking back at the five years, we can only say that we have learned from our Santa Clara CARES participants. Because of the data-collection strategies we implemented, each year we learned a little more about the challenges they faced while attending school and each year we responded with new supports and resources.

It has been our great privilege to administer the Santa Clara CARES initiative. This report is intended as a review of our initial five-year journey. You will find we have outlined our primary strategies, what we learned from implementing the strategies, and our response to what we learned.

We wish to thank all the organizations locally, regionally, and statewide that have collaborated with E3 Institute to help launch and successfully implement the first five years of this critically important initiative. Rest assured that E3 Institute is now deeply invested in the future success of the next five years of learning.

Sincerely,

Yolanda Garcia  
Director

Ilene M. Hertz  
Assistant Director and  
Santa Clara CARES Manager
What is the E3 Institute?

The purpose of the E3 Institute is to support and strengthen early childhood professional development through education, recruitment, and financial incentives and rewards. E3 Institute serves California’s Santa Clara County and reaches new recruits, family early education providers, center-based programs, programs for children with special needs, employers, faith-based providers, and the corporate community with the goal of leveraging local resources for early education professionals. E3 Institute is a nonprofit research, development, and service agency operated by WestEd. E3 Institute’s overarching purpose is to achieve positive outcomes for children and families. These outcomes include:

- Every early educator in Santa Clara County is engaged in a professional development program toward a degree or credential
- Continuing professional development is mandatory to maintain early education credentials
- Early educators in California are credentialled by the California Department of Education’s California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
- The Santa Clara County early education community is unified to influence policy and affect positive change
- The broader Santa Clara County is better informed about early childhood education teacher preparation and its impact on child outcomes

To achieve these outcomes, E3 Institute has used an innovative approach to collaborate with community agencies and educational institutions to sustain and strengthen professional development in Santa Clara County’s early education workforce.

Created with a foundation in research

Increasing scientific evidence shows that the emotional, physical, and intellectual environment that a child is exposed to in the early years of life has a profound impact on brain development. As such, parents and early educators can significantly influence early childhood learning. Research demonstrates that when early childhood educators are well educated and well trained, the children they teach are more successful in school and life. Other studies show that many highly qualified and caring educators leave the field because pay and incentives are low. E3 Institute is successfully addressing these challenges.

Response to the community’s call

In November 1998, California voters approved Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act. The Act created new funding to both address the lack of public funding and support for early childhood development so that children would enter school fully prepared to succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. A new state commission – California First 5 – and local commissions in each county were created to administer the funds.

A significant strategy to meet the goal of the California Children and Families Act was to “expand and retain a highly qualified child development workforce by improving wages and benefits by establishing a professional development institute.” As such, the California First 5 Commission issued a request for proposals. In Santa Clara County alone, hundreds of residents, child advocates, and educational professionals were prepared to support a professional development institute to enhance, expand, and support the early education workforce.

In August 2000, WestEd convened a group of early childhood professionals representing 10 community agencies and education institutions to formulate a plan to establish such a professional development institute. Led by Yolanda Garcia, then Director of Children’s Services, Santa Clara County Office of Education, and Peter Mangione, Co-Director of WestEd’s Center for Child and Family Studies, the group submitted a successful proposal to the FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission to develop a comprehensive system that would improve the educational levels of early educators. The proposal was based on research indicating that improved educational levels of teachers correlate directly with higher quality of programs and better outcomes for children.

Acceptance and implementation of this proposal represented a major step in funding a system that eventually led to significant improvement in programs and services. Following the proposal award, WestEd engaged a diverse group of early childhood professionals representing community agencies and educational institutions to create the E3 Institute—Advancing Excellence in Early Education. Since its inception in 2001, the E3 Institute (formerly named the Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development) has emphasized a collaborative and responsive approach, bringing together perspectives from those in the community, education, policy, and research. The social return on this investment can now be measured in terms of increased educational levels of the early childhood education workforce and ultimately in positive outcomes for children and families.

“Since participating in CARES, I have continued my higher education, am now enrolled in a BA program, and create more age-appropriate activities for the children.”

Maria Toni Martinez
Center-based Early Educator
Santa Clara CARES
Participant Rounds 1-5
“I would not be in the field if it were not for the professional incentives offered by CARES.”

Clara Filker-Sciupac
Family Home-based Early Educator
Santa Clara CARES Participant Rounds 1-5

Birth of Santa Clara CARES

Santa Clara CARES was established in 2001 when FIRST 5 Santa Clara County awarded a grant to WestEd’s E3 Institute to administer the county CARES program as part of the statewide CARES program. Santa Clara CARES is also funded by First 5 California, and the California Department of Education: Child Development Division.

In parallel with the creation of California First 5, the state bill known as AB 212 was passed to address staff turnover and compensation for early childhood educators working in state-subsidized child development centers. Santa Clara County, through the Local Early Childhood Planning Council, directed the E3 Institute to use the AB 212 funds to augment CARES funding, thus offering one countywide system of financial incentives offered to all early educators serving children age 0-5, regardless of whether they work in a subsidized program or a private one. The statewide CARES initiative is the product of 20 years of advocacy work in California conducted by educators, community members, child advocates, policy makers, and government leaders.

CARES originally stood for Compensation and Retention Encourage Stability, but after two years the name was changed to Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards to emphasize its focus on raising educational standards.

What is Santa Clara CARES?

Santa Clara CARES is a financial incentive program administered by E3 Institute that is designed to promote, reward, and encourage educational attainment among early educators in Santa Clara County through a system of financial renumeration and rewards. Stipends are based on the participants’ current education levels, and serve as incentives for participants to continue their education, since the financial stipends are offered each year. Financial stipends range from $200 to $4,000, depending on participants’ levels of education in child development.
What did E3 Institute set out to do?

E3 Institute has focused on promoting educational opportunities for those who teach and care for Santa Clara County’s youngest children to increase the quality of educational experiences for young children. E3 Institute set out to administer a financial incentive program, through CARES, linked to educational attainment to engage the early childhood education workforce at the college level. E3 Institute also works to achieve the following:

- Leverage systemic change in early childhood education higher education to move local members of the early childhood education workforce along a degree path
- Facilitate communication within and among local colleges and universities
- Expand opportunities for English-language learners
- Increase the level of college-based education among all early educators
- Develop and diversify leadership in the field

**E3 Institute achieves the above with the following multi-level approach:**

- Developing local partnerships to create innovative and collaborative ways to enhance quality throughout the field
- Convening CARES Roundtable meetings
- Collecting and using data to inform the evolution of Santa Clara CARES
- Providing financial incentives
- Increasing awareness of the early education field and its impact on childhood learning
- Shaping and influencing public policy
- Engaging the early childhood development community through advocacy and coordination of resources
- Leveraging existing resources and developing new funding sources to increase and expand professional development opportunities
- Advocating research-based practices
Faranak Hooman

*Center-based Early Educator*

CARES Participant Rounds 1–5

FARANAK HOOMAN attended college in her native country of Iran, but she was unable to obtain documentation for any of her course work. Once in Santa Clara County, she began her education by taking a few units each quarter while her daughter was very young. She had never thought of becoming a preschool teacher, even though she had taken some courses in child development. Her long-term goal was to earn a BA degree in psychology. When Faranak took a one-unit workshop in child development, she learned three critical facts: a) she loved working with preschool children, b) early care and education was a profession with career potential, c) and there was a new initiative in our county called CARES that could assist with her course work if she chose to work in the field of early education.

Fast forward to today. Faranak has now worked as a center-based preschool teacher for many years. She has also earned a BA degree in psychology from San Jose State University with a minor in child development, has completed significant work on her MA, and hopes one day to own her own child development center.

“CARES gave me an educational path and helped me finance my journey down that path,” she says. “CARES contributes to the most important aspect of child development—the increased education of teachers. CARES is really about the benefits to the children.”

“We value the first five years of a child’s life; many children spend more than six hours a day with caregivers. The more knowledgeable we are as caregivers, the better we can stimulate a child emotionally and intellectually. Education for the teachers results in higher quality of care, which is the most effective intervention for children.”
CHITRA SRIDHARAN did not start out with a goal to become a preschool teacher. She earned a BA degree in architecture in 1986 in her country of origin and then moved to America. In 1999, when her children were mature enough for her to return to full-time employment, Chitra chose working with preschool children as her new career. “I took classes at De Anza in early childhood education, but did not have a structured professional development path until I learned of Santa Clara CARES. With the help of CARES, I defined a course of study in ECE.”

Chitra says she has been very impressed with Santa Clara CARES every year she has participated. During her first year with Santa Clara CARES, she submitted her international educational credentials for translation and evaluation. “CARES paid for it and took care of all the paperwork, which showed my BA in architecture was fully equivalent to a BA in America. Of course, I continued taking ECE courses and working toward qualification in an ECE Master’s program.”

She received a welcome surprise from Santa Clara CARES when she was invited to apply for the MA Cohort sponsored by E3 Institute through the San Jose State University Child and Adolescent Development Department. “I never thought I would have the opportunity to earn a graduate degree. I appreciate CARES very much for all the support it has provided.”

Because of her education, Chitra says, “I am much more confident in dealing with parents now that I understand childhood development; I have higher expectations from the children, too. I love working with preschool children. The growth I see in a child from the beginning of the year to the end of the year is tremendously satisfying to me.”
**What strategies are used to administer the Santa Clara CARES incentive program?**

**STRATEGY A  Develop Partnerships**

E3 Institute created an infrastructure that facilitates connections throughout the county through Santa Clara CARES to improve equity and access to education. Contracting with four partner agencies has been critical to providing needed support to Santa Clara CARES participants working in each partner agency’s designated zip code areas. These partner agencies—Go Kids, Kidango, Provider Connection, and PTRAC—work directly with CARES participants to distribute and collect their stipend applications and provide outreach and technical assistance to new and returning applicants. Santa Clara CARES partner agencies also offer workshops with colleges, refer applicants to Santa Clara CARES college partners, collect brief personal stories from participants, and enter participants’ demographic and educational data into the Santa Clara CARES online database.

> “Santa Clara CARES has given early educators a reason to focus on their own educational accomplishments. As a result of the support CARES provides, the workforce now has the motivation and the means to enhance their education.”

*—Toni Campbell, Chair, Child and Adolescent Development Department, San Jose State University*

E3 Institute also developed strategic partnerships with every community college and two four-year universities in the county that offer early childhood education and child development courses. These colleges are De Anza, Foothill, Gavilan, Mission, San Jose City/Evergreen Valley, San Jose State University, National Hispanic University, and West Valley. Santa Clara CARES college partners help Santa Clara CARES applicants with coursework and degree paths, prepare Professional Development and Education Plans (PDEP), provide information about Santa Clara CARES in their early education/child development courses, collect information about the needs of Santa Clara CARES applicants, and collaborate with E3 Institute to offer institutional solutions to identified needs.

**What E3 Institute learned**

Initially, E3 Institute held separate meetings with the partner agencies and the college partners, since it appeared that their roles with Santa Clara CARES were separate and distinct. However, E3 Institute quickly became aware of the advantages of meeting as a group to discuss how to work together to maximize the impact of the Santa Clara CARES program on the early education workforce.

**E3 Institute’s response**

E3 Institute combined the partner agencies and the college partners to facilitate an ongoing dialogue about the intricacies of providing outreach and enabling the workforce to navigate the complex system of higher education. This group, the Santa Clara CARES Roundtable, holds monthly meetings and serves to ensure that information obtained by the partner agencies and the college partners are shared, and both short- and long-term solutions are developed to assist Santa Clara CARES participants in meeting their educational goals.
Strategy B  Convene monthly Roundtable meetings

Initially, the Santa Clara CARES Roundtable meetings were a response to what was learned, but it quickly became apparent that convening the CARES Roundtable was a strategy of its own. E3 Institute holds joint CARES Roundtable meetings with its four community-based partner agencies and eight college partners for long-range planning and policy development to address the demand for an educated workforce. In these meetings, analyses of data from CARES applications are presented, survey results are considered, new programs and resources are discussed, and new strategies are developed. With Santa Clara CARES as the catalyst, the linkages created through the CARES Roundtable have helped the colleges and community-based organizations work toward similar goals.

Santa Clara CARES helps early educators overcome cultural and linguistic challenges to access opportunities for training and education—often bringing them into the professional development system through community-based training where they may feel more comfortable, and gradually transitioning to college-based work with support and guidance. Roundtable members help develop and often serve as “beta testers” for the technology instruments that E3 Institute develops to track, analyze, understand, and build programs and activities aimed at the unique educational and professional development needs of the early childhood workforce in Santa Clara County.

What E3 Institute learned

Creating a Roundtable comprised of these partners was a historical event in Santa Clara County. Eight colleges and four provider agencies, each with its own requirements, operating procedures, systems, and expectations are at the same table for the first time to work together for long-range planning and policy development to address the demand for an educated workforce. The work of the CARES Roundtable has gone a long way toward breaking down barriers for systems that must work together to implement systemic change.

E3 Institute’s response

Through the work of the Roundtable, E3 Institute provides resources to the colleges and universities to expand course offerings based on the needs of the workforce. For example, E3 Institute sponsors coursework in the areas of Adult Supervision, Arts Specialization, Literacy, Environment Rating Scales, Directors’ Network, coursework in Spanish, and combined English as a second language/CORE4 courses.

4 Definition: CORE courses include foundational knowledge and skills in early childhood education. They provide a basis for all other early childhood education courses.

“...I have seen a difference in the students in the early childhood education courses I teach due to Santa Clara CARES. It used to be that students with little experience took classes hoping to complete just the CORE courses. Now, there are many students working in the field who take courses to improve their level of education and professional development. Students at this level of experience enrich the quality of the class. ”

Frederick J. Ferrer—Adjunct Faculty Member, De Anza College
E3 Institute operates its own web-based data collection system, designed by WestEd’s Application Development Group (ADG), to track Santa Clara CARES participation and program outcomes for three primary purposes:

- Prepare reports that are necessary for First 5 California statewide evaluation
- Track data required in order to receive First 5 California matching funds
- Track data that benefit local evaluation, program planning, and policy activities

The Santa Clara CARES database includes information pertinent to individual recipients such as age, gender, ethnicity, spoken language(s), level of educational attainment, program setting (center-based versus family home-based), and longevity in the field. This information is used to assess demographic information such as whether E3 Institute is serving a substantial and representative proportion of eligible early educators and whether it is attracting a pool of recipients whose ethnicity and language skills mirror the population of Santa Clara County. The Santa Clara CARES database also tracks information pursuant to which “steps” individual Santa Clara CARES participants have attained along a designated path of educational milestones, based on the statewide educational and professional development system known as the California Child Development Permit Matrix, developed by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

The information contained in the database tracks aggregate data as well as individual progress along the Santa Clara CARES matrix. This information is instrumental in discerning the degree to which individual recipients are advancing in their professional development. It is also used to determine the needs of specific subsets of the workforce such as those who attained their education outside of the United States so that E3 Institute can contact them directly and offer resources and support. The Santa Clara CARES database is modified each year to capture new data collected by E3 Institute through the Santa Clara CARES application period.

**CARES Steps**

Steps are the levels of qualifications required to earn specific stipends. Each step has an increasingly complex list of requirements to qualify for a stipend. Names of steps are: Entry level and Steps 1-8 with 8 the highest. The CARES Step Matrix is based on the statewide educational and professional development system known as the California Child Development Permit Matrix.
What E3 Institute learned

By gathering quantitative and qualitative workforce data, it has been possible to “put a face to” the early care and education field and describe this local workforce accurately for the first time. A few Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participant demographics are described below.

Ranges in age of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants

The majority of participants are clustered in the 40-50 year range and 50-59 year range. Figure 1 shows 30% are 40-49 years of age and 25% are 50-59 years of age.

CARES Rounds

E3 Institute identifies Santa Clara CARES participation year as a round. The first, second, third, fourth, and fifth years are referred to as Round 1, Round 2, Round 3, Round 4, and Round 5.

Gender of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants

Figure 2 shows the overwhelming majority of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants are female.
Average annual salaries of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants across job titles

The average annual salaries of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants across job titles shown in Figure 3 were self-reported on the Round 5 stipend application. The early educators who spend the most time with children are on the lowest end of the pay scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Director</th>
<th>Assistant Director</th>
<th>Site Supervisor</th>
<th>Master/Lead Teacher</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Substitute</th>
<th>Assistant/Aide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$48,353</td>
<td>$32,757</td>
<td>$39,351</td>
<td>$32,675</td>
<td>$28,250</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
<td>$19,919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other characteristics of Santa Clara CARES participants

E3 Institute has also learned the following about Santa Clara CARES participants as a result of the data-collection process.

What E3 Institute learned

English Learners  The challenges for early educators pursuing professional development in early childhood education can be compounded for those who are also English-language learners.

General Education  Early educators can encounter difficulty when attempting to accomplish General Education (GE) courses that are required for a degree, such as English, math or science, social science, and humanities. These courses may seem impractical to an early educator with competing work/family responsibilities who is required to attend classes at night for coursework unrelated to child development. This difficulty is magnified when they are not counseled at the outset about what coursework is necessary to complete a degree.

Regulatory Fragmentation  The regulatory system for the early childhood workforce is fragmented, and different standards for teacher preparation are required based on the type of program (center-based versus family home-based) and whether a program receives state or federal subsidies. Early education professionals find this confusing and illogical. See Table 1 on page 16.

E3 Institute’s response

English Learners  E3 Institute has engaged a private four-year university into the Santa Clara CARES Roundtable because it offers a BA in early childhood education, provides significant financial aid to the students, and serves the needs of Spanish-speaking students.

E3 Institute has supported programs for home-based early educators and English-language learners through a college-provider partnership in North Santa Clara County. For example, the Early Learning Quality Improvement Program (ELQuIP) program offers neighborhood-based CORE classes in Spanish, an opportunity for students to work in a cohort that provides support and guidance as they move forward with their coursework, and a mentor system that pairs them with another early educator.

General Education  E3 Institute has also bolstered communication and education among guidance and child development departments in the community colleges through college liaisons, and now requires Santa Clara CARES participants to complete a PDEP (Professional Development and Education Plan) and update it annually. Completion of a PDEP requires a one-on-one meeting with a Santa Clara CARES college representative to discuss educational goals and plan coursework based on attaining those goals.

Regulatory Fragmentation  While E3 Institute develops programs and provides support for targeted segments of the workforce, it maintains the same requirements for all early educators participating in the Santa Clara CARES program. This has helped to unify the field by bringing together early educators in order to provide high-quality standards to all children enrolled in the county’s licensed early education programs.
STRATEGY D  Provide Financial Incentives

The Santa Clara CARES stipend program helps to build a skilled, stable early education workforce by linking monetary rewards with educational attainment, educational development, and longevity in the field. The program is intended to increase retention and recognize early educators as professionals. The CARES participant is free to use the stipend in any way.

What E3 Institute learned

E3 Institute has learned that Santa Clara CARES participants use their stipends for a variety of purposes including the purchase of new equipment and materials for their early education program, tuition and school expenses, and personal and family needs. The recognition that comes with the stipend makes a participant feel valued as a professional often for the first time ever.

E3 Institute’s response

E3 Institute advocates for continued CARES funding and other financial incentives for early educators to increase their education levels. E3 Institute has experienced overwhelmingly positive support for and participation in CARES. Santa Clara CARES has had a significant impact in raising the educational levels and professionalism of the workforce, yet system-wide change is needed at the state level if a higher level of education is to be required for all early educators working with our youngest children. Until higher education is a requirement at the state level, voluntary financial incentive programs such as CARES are necessary to encourage educational attainment. E3 Institute works locally, statewide, and nationally inside organizations such as the Child Development Policy Institute (CDPI), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), and the Bay Area Regional Professional Development Collaborative (BAPDC) to impact awareness and bring about policy change.
STRATEGY E  Increase Awareness

E3 Institute prepares and disseminates the latest research-based information and analyses to help early educators, parents, educational leaders, and policy makers understand the correlation between the education of early childhood educators and its impact on childhood learning. E3 Institute has held forums and summits in which representatives of early childhood, higher education, community-based agencies, researchers, scientists, policy makers, practitioners, foundations, and legislators convene to share perspectives and develop common goals and guiding principles.

What E3 Institute learned

In addition to raising awareness among early education leaders and policymakers, the early education workforce itself has a great desire to be heard, recognized, and supported. Historically, the early education workforce has not been effective at advocating change for a variety of reasons including not being taken seriously as a profession and a lack of familiarity with the complex system of policy making and legislative influence.

Because the early education stakeholders comprise a diverse group (see Figures 5-8 and Table 2), and since Santa Clara CARES' work is based on a collaborative model, raising awareness through communication and information dissemination must come in many forms.

E3 Institute’s response

E3 Institute extends its outreach through many venues, including distributing an electronic newsletter, facilitating web-based discussion groups, authoring and distributing policy briefs, participating in policy forums, and assuming leadership roles locally, regionally, statewide, and nationally. E3 Institute will also continue to communicate directly with early educators to ensure that their voices are heard and their stories are told. One of the most meaningful ways that E3 Institute elicits feedback is by collecting stories told in their own words by Santa Clara CARES participants that portray how Santa Clara CARES has positively impacted their professional development and their work with young children. Collection and dissemination of these stories is an important reflection of the work of E3 Institute.
**Strategy F  Shape and Influence Public Policy**

Positive state and local policy reform is needed to create high quality, uniform standards for the field, and to reward early education programs that reflect those standards. As such, E3 Institute has sponsored three major forums/summits to engage policy makers, institutions of higher learning, and early educators in meaningful planning to address the complex needs of the early education workforce. In addition, E3 Institute develops research-based position papers, contributes to legislative proposals, and mobilizes early educators to influence policy makers.

E3 Institute has contributed significant leadership in the form of staff time, commitment, and other resources to organizations including the City of San Jose Early Care and Education Commission (CSJECEC), University of California-Berkeley Center for the Study of Industrial Relations, CDPI, NAEYC, CAEYC, and BAPDC.

**What E3 Institute learned**

E3 Institute’s work and accomplishments during the first five years of Santa Clara CARES implementation would not have been possible without the collaboration and involvement of the organizations named in the preceding paragraph. E3 Institute’s goal to have every early education teacher possess a degree will take significant policy and systemic change on both statewide and national levels. This work will require the involvement of multiple state agencies including the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the California Department of Education’s Child Development Division, and the California Social Services Agency’s Community Care Licensing Division.

**E3 Institute’s response**

One of the most important indicators of the need for systemic change is the fragmented statewide system of teacher qualifications for early childhood professionals. E3 Institute will continue its work locally, regionally, and statewide to advocate alignment of the licensing system so that all early educators, regardless of the types of program in which they work, are held to the same high standards for program oversight, teacher qualifications, and coursework. Table 1 shows the range of qualifications in three different types of programs for the position of teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Types</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Private Fee-Based Center-Based Programs | 12 units in Early Childhood Education  
Units are not required to come from an accredited college or university; Courses with a Grade of “D” are accepted | Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations/Social Services Agency: Community Care Licensing Division/Center-Based Regulations, Division 12, Chapter 1 |
| State-Subsidized Center-Based Programs | 24 units in Early Childhood Education plus 16 units in General Education  
Units must be from an accredited college or university courses must have Grade “C” or higher | California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) Permit Matrix |
| Family Child Care Programs         | None                                                                           | Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations/Social Services Agency: Community Care Licensing Division/Family Child Care Regulations; Division 12, Chapter 3 |

Other areas that require systemic reform are course articulation between colleges and course transferability from the community college system to colleges offering a four-year degree, educational advising, and supports for English-language learners.
Early educators need information, resources, and support to achieve higher levels of educational attainment. Santa Clara CARES helps identify their needs and links them with the appropriate resources, as well as advocates for the development of new supports.

Santa Clara CARES has a responsive support model that addresses the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the field and ensures equity and access for early education professionals by:

- Creating a model that extends to all early education programs including for-profit, non-profit, subsidized, tuition-based, family home-based, and center-based programs
- Including its partner agencies and college partners in the development of the model
- Maintaining an active collaboration with Spanish-speaking family-based educator networks to provide counseling and advice as early educators progress toward earning a degree
- Holding literacy events including:
  - Four book readings by the authors of children’s books in Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Hindi languages
  - A literacy conference held in April 2005 attended by more than 2,000 early education professionals, which featured 45 workshops on early childhood literacy-related topics
- Providing support to English as a second language (ESL) cohorts linked to CORE college courses, basic skills or academic preparation courses (electives), administration and supervision courses, literacy events, membership to professional associations, multi-lingual staff support, Santa Clara CARES application clinics, and leadership opportunities
- Collaborating with a Santa Clara CARES college partner to develop a three-course (six unit) Literacy Specialization sequence (funded by the Community Foundation Silicon Valley), which includes:
  - Storytelling
  - Language- and Second-language Acquisition
  - Children’s Literature
  - Some courses are taught on Saturday to accommodate working early educators.

- Forming a partnership to support the following three-unit child development courses taught in Spanish:
  - Introduction to Child Development
  - Child, Family, and Community
  - Child Development: The Early Years

Developing a service for early educators who attain some or all of their education outside of the United States to help them obtain translation and the U.S. equivalencies for their international education. Figure 4 shows that 29% of Round 5 participants attained some or all of their education outside the United States.

![Figure 4](image-url)
What E3 Institute learned

It can be extraordinarily difficult for many early educators to advance their education because of competing work and family responsibilities. Additionally, many of them lack academic preparation and funds for tuition and books. Despite this, our county’s workforce has embraced the Santa Clara CARES program with enthusiasm and determination, which has created a rising demand for college courses and four-year degree programs in child development.

Although individual determination is key to succeeding, it is not enough. Major systems reform is necessary at the state level to offer students the counseling and supports they need and to provide colleges with the necessary infrastructure to offer a clear educational and professional career path.

E3 Institute’s response

E3 Institute will continue to advocate for policy change at the local, regional, state, and national levels, and encourage its staff and partners to take on leadership positions in organizations such as CSJECEC, CDPI, NAEYC, CAEYC, and BAPDC whenever possible.

E3 Institute will also continue to collect and analyze data on the workforce to provide the colleges with useful information such as what courses are requested most often, what coursework is needed to achieve AA and BA degrees, and what supports—such as counseling or information on financial aid options—are needed to ensure the students’ success.

STRATEGY H  Leverage Resources

E3 Institute leverages existing resources and develops new funding and supports to expand professional development opportunities for early educators. During its first five years of Santa Clara CARES implementation, new funding enabled E3 Institute to:

- Partner with Alameda County FIRST 5 (Every Child Counts), and the University of California, Berkeley to develop the paper, Clearing a Career Path: Lessons from Two Communities in Promoting Higher Education Access for the Early Care and Education Workforce
- Participate in a workforce study conducted by the California Resource and Referral Network to determine the supply of early education spaces in nine counties. This study received national media attention and served to raise awareness about early childhood education issues
- Participate in a new corporate program with WFD Consulting on behalf of IBM (International Business Machines, Inc.) employees located within zip codes in Santa Clara County identified by IBM. (WFD Consulting works with corporations to augment work/life solutions for employees.) E3 Institute works with early education programs in IBM-identified zip codes to offer enhancements for programs serving children with special needs and infants and toddlers. These enhancements include training, translation and evaluation of international education documents, environmental rating assistance for classroom assessments, and assistance in applying for Santa Clara CARES
- Develop college coursework for a Literacy Specialization
- Contribute to the update and expansion of the CDPI website. This organization reaches more than 7,000 people annually through its website and by distributing policy bulletins on advocacy and legislative issues
What E3 Institute learned

Leveraging resources creates opportunities to broaden the scope of work. In addition to expanding programs to reach a wider segment of the early childhood professionals, collaboration with other counties creates effective regional solutions. The participation in regional and state collaboratives has grown in importance as California First 5 continues to support professional development of early educators.

E3 Institute has been asked to demonstrate the Santa Clara CARES data collection systems that are used to make decisions to meet the needs of early educators. As E3 Institute grapples with local challenges such as systems reform and transferability issues for early educators attempting to achieve degrees, additional and increased demands will be placed on E3 Institute.

E3 Institute’s response

E3 Institute continues to seek additional funding to widen and deepen the impact of its work and to continue its collaborations with other counties. The work at the regional level has gathered greater momentum and recognition that must be shared. The integration and added value of implementing several FIRST 5 Santa Clara County initiatives that reflect both local and state investments (such as the Power of Preschool) will allow E3 Institute to contribute to both targeted and broad strategies.

E3 Institute has built a successful model with multiple levels of engagement of colleges and universities. The technical and systems expertise will now need to be shared at local, regional, state, and national venues.

E3 Institute will model best practices in professional development activities, which demonstrates how collaborative strategies involving many community agencies, colleges, and universities have been successfully developed.

E3 Institute has received significant recognition by WFD Consulting and IBM to support targeted projects and enhance its work. The Community Foundation Silicon Valley has also engaged and supported E3 Institute for early literacy initiatives. The Lucile and David Packard Foundation has provided important contributions for planning of the Power of Preschool and in the development and documentation of professional development strategies.

As the lead for early education initiatives for FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, E3 Institute will continue to provide leadership for professional development activities as well as benefit from the expertise of the larger WestEd organization. In the future, all the targeted strategies can be replicated within the county and regional levels and contribute to policy development.

“CARES has given me opportunities to meet great role models in my field and makes me strive to provide a better program for my children.”

Nguyen Sanders
Family Home-based Early Educator
Santa Clara CARES
Participant Rounds 3-5
STRATEGY I Advocate Research-Based Practices

The E3 Institute is a program of WestEd, a nonprofit education and human development research, development, and service agency with expertise in education assessment and accountability; early childhood and youth development; program evaluation; community building; and policy analysis. As such, E3 Institute rests on a foundation of best practices grounded in current research. This research has shown that well-trained and qualified early childhood education professionals provide care that results in better child outcomes, that is, improved long-term intellectual, emotional, and physical health.5 Research has also shown that many early childhood education professionals leave the field because they lack financial incentives, a livable salary, and recognition for their work.6 The work of E3 Institute is driven by the importance of a well-educated workforce as an indicator of quality in early education.

E3 Institute staff members are well-grounded in research-based practices. For example, E3 Institute’s director served on the American Academy of Sciences’ Committee on the Integration of Sciences in Early Childhood Education, contributing to the academy’s seminal report, From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development.

E3 Institute’s Director held a seat on the 14-month countywide research project funded by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, The High-Risk Research and Design Initiative. This research project convened service providers and policy makers to study best practices in early education and recommend an appropriate service delivery model for the county’s highest risk children and families in preparation for drafting the countywide preschool master plan. The resulting report, The Compendium of Relevant Research (2005), helped define the 14 critical elements for a quality early learning experience: number one on the list is the development of a well-educated workforce. E3 Institute further contributed to this research project by conducting an extensive data-mapping project that resulted in geographic depictions of the zip codes in Santa Clara County where the highest concentration of families exposed to multiple risk factors resided. E3 Institute’s work helped decide where in our county to begin providing enriched preschool services.

What E3 Institute learned

Improving the educational qualifications of early educators has a direct, positive impact on the children in their care. The most highly publicized, long-term studies on preschool-age children (i.e., Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention Project, Chicago Child-Parent Care Centers, Perry Preschool Project) show that to be effective, any preschool intervention must be of highest quality. The number one indicator of quality is teacher education.

E3 Institute’s response

E3 Institute promotes the latest research-based information to help early educators, parents, educational leaders, and policy makers understand the correlation between the education of early childhood educators and its impact on childhood learning. E3 Institute’s managers participate in interviews and information sharing with regional research project staff such as those from the University of California, Berkeley Center for the Study of Child Care Employment.

What has E3 Institute accomplished during CARES’ first five years?

E3 Institute has grown and evolved during the first five years in parallel with the evolution of Santa Clara CARES. One purpose of creating this report is to reflect on how far both E3 Institute and Santa Clara CARES have come. Following are a few accomplishments:

- Experienced staff growth from three to 18 full-time staff
- Expanded Santa Clara CARES database to enhance data collection and analysis
- Reached a higher percentage of the early childhood education workforce through Santa Clara CARES and related projects
- Shown qualitative and anecdotal successes
- Targeted outreach of underserved populations
- Developed leadership supports, such as formation of directors’ networks and provision of scholarships to early educators to attend state and national conferences
- Recruited mentor teachers
- Established a cohort of Santa Clara CARES participants and sponsored their enrollment in the BA program in Child and Adolescent Studies through San Jose State University
- Created an online Professional Development and Education Plan (PDEP) used by the college representatives on behalf of Santa Clara CARES participants
- Streamlined process for obtaining a California Child Development Permit through a collaboration with Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Funded services to translate and evaluate international educational documents for equivalency

“The E3 Institute’s Santa Clara CARES program has noticeably improved the quality of our centers. It has motivated staff to return to college and enhance their skills working with children and families.”

Paul Miller
Executive Director, Kidango
Who are Santa Clara CARES participants?

Every early childhood educator in a licensed program in Santa Clara County is eligible to participate in Santa Clara CARES. E3 Institute staff use data supplied by the California Department of Social Services/California Community Care Licensing Division to estimate the size of the early education workforce. During the first year (Round 1) of Santa Clara CARES implementation, concurrent with the start-up of E3 Institute, a massive outreach effort took place along with a demanding Round 1 application process. The result was that 36% of the estimated early education workforce in Santa Clara County became Santa Clara CARES participants. During this noteworthy first year, the following was also accomplished:

- Negotiation and development of Santa Clara CARES partner agency contracts
- Development of Santa Clara CARES eligibility criteria
- Preparation of outreach and application materials
- Translation and distribution of materials
- Development of a data-collection system
- Design and implementation of technical assistance workshops
- Processing of applications
- Development of a transcript review process that involved faculty members
- Distribution of stipend checks
- Development and implementation of an appeal process

The amount of funding awarded each year has steadily increased as more awards are made at the higher steps. During Round 5 (the 2005-06 Santa Clara CARES year) a total of $2,908,850 was awarded to 1,302 early childhood educators in Santa Clara County. The total amount of stipend funding for the first five years is more than $14 million awarded to 4,418 participants. This figure represents about 72% of the Santa Clara County early childhood education workforce employed in licensed center-based and family home-based programs.

36% of the estimated early education workforce in Santa Clara County became Round 1 CARES participants.

Upon completion of Round 5, the CARES program awarded incentives to 72% of the estimated Santa Clara County early education workforce.

7 The CARES step matrix outlines the levels of qualifications required to earn specific stipends. Each step has an increasingly complex list of requirements to qualify for a stipend. Names of steps are: Entry level and steps 1-8 with eight the highest.
Racial/ethnic background of Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants compared to Santa Clara County children ages 0-4 years

Nearly 30% of the Round 5 participants identify themselves as being White, Hispanic/Latino, or Asian. The 2003 U.S. Census shows a similar background breakout for Santa Clara Children 0-4 years of age. Although the CARES database and the U.S. Census data use different racial/ethnic categories, similarities are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5—CARES Applicant Round 5 Race and Ethnicity (N=1,302)

- 1% Alaskan Native or American Indian
- 1% Pacific Islander
- 3% White, Hispanic/Latino
- 4% Black, African-American
- 9% Other
- 27% Asian
- 27% Hispanic/Latino
- 28% White

Note: Data were self-reported on Round 5 stipend applications

Figure 6—Santa Clara County Children Ages 0–4, by Ethnicity

- 0% Native American, 0% Other
- 6% Multiple Race
- 27% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 32% White
- 35% Hispanic/Latino

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2003 American Community Survey

Languages in which Santa Clara CARES participants report fluency

Table 2—Languages in which Round 5 Santa Clara CARES Participants Reported Fluency

| American Sign Language | Chinese | Croatian | Hungarian | Igbo | Ilocano | Italian | Japanese | Kannada | Kikuyu | Korean | Malay | Mandarin | Marathi | Pashto | Persian | Peruvian | Polish | Portuguese | Punjabi | Romainian | Russian | Serbo-Croatian | Sinhala | Spanish | Swahili | Tagalog | Taiwanese | Tamil | Telugu | Tigrinya | Thai | Turkish | Urdu | Vietnamese | Visayan | Yoruba |
|------------------------|--------|----------|-----------|------|--------|---------|----------|---------|--------|--------|-------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------|------------|--------|-------------|---------|---------------|--------|----------|--------|--------|------------|------|---------|-------|----------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
Languages Santa Clara CARES Round 5 participants speak

Figure 7 shows the highest percentage of participants reported speaking English at home with Spanish and English/Spanish as second and third highest. Figure 7 also shows the highest percentage of participants reported speaking English at work with English/Spanish at work second highest and English/Vietnamese at work third highest.

Note: Data are self-reported on Round 5 Santa Clara CARES stipend application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages Spoken at Home</th>
<th>Languages Spoken at Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese, English</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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<td>English</td>
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<td>10.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>English, Spanish, Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>English, Tagalog</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>English, Vietnamese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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What other E3 Institute initiatives complement Santa Clara CARES?

**Arts Enrichment Initiative (AEI)**

E3 Institute’s Arts Enrichment Initiative (AEI) provides art education programs to preschool children and their families through a collaborative with Arts Council Silicon Valley, Children’s Discovery Museum, San Jose Public Library, and Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. Art groups and organizations provide hands-on, age-appropriate art experiences for young children and increase awareness of the importance of early art education through teacher-artist programs. AEI helps early educators integrate fine arts learning for young children in the classroom as well as provides opportunities for young children and their families to participate in developmentally appropriate art experiences at public venues. AEI activities join directly with the goals of Santa Clara CARES by supporting early childhood educators to understand the importance of the arts in early learning and by supporting the development of art coursework and art specializations, thereby incorporating techniques for learning through the arts in college art curricula.

**Santa Clara Power of Preschool (PoP)**

Santa Clara County Power of Preschool (PoP) is a high-quality, free, voluntary, part-day preschool program that expands access to preschool for Santa Clara County’s 3- and 4-year-old children and provides additional resources for families and early educators. PoP is a multi-year project that is being implemented in phases. It builds on and integrates with existing public and private early care and education programs and partnerships. The targeted population is composed of children and families in high-priority/underserved communities. Through a high level of collaboration, early educators work with community partners to provide a three-part model, which includes:

- High-quality early learning environments
- Home visitation with families when needed and appropriate
- Therapeutic interventions and family support

E3 Institute launched an elaborate, two-year community engagement PoP planning process and is now facilitating the program’s implementation. The emphasis PoP places on quality environments for children connects directly to the goals of Santa Clara CARES to develop innovative and collaborative ways to enhance quality throughout the field. Santa Clara CARES is an integral part of workforce development and serves as the basis for teacher qualifications for Santa Clara County’s PoP.
Teacher Institutes

E3 Institute has sponsored and developed the PoP Early Educator Summer and Winter Teacher Institutes in partnership with the Instructional and Curriculum Branch of the Santa Clara County Office of Education. This training program was developed to support the preparation of early educators participating in the PoP classrooms and document services and outcomes for PoP children and parents. The PoP Teacher Institutes convene planning groups, implement training sessions, develop and implement an evaluation system to assess effectiveness of the training, and participate in the follow-up planning to reinforce participants’ skill building and learning.

Early Literacy Initiative

Early literacy is a key strategy for improving the home learning environment for young children. To support this initiative, E3 Institute has partnered with libraries and children’s book publishers to increase awareness of the importance of reading to children during their first five years. In April 2005, E3 Institute hosted a two-day early literacy conference in San Jose, California, funded by Community Foundation Silicon Valley. The event drew more than 2,000 members of the early education community. The activities of E3 Institute’s early literacy initiative connect directly with the goals of Santa Clara CARES as they inform professionals and parents of the latest research and best practices in early literacy and provide effective assessment techniques to help professionals select appropriate language development strategies.

Inclusion Collaborative

E3 Institute has received annual grants from Santa Clara County FIRST 5 to co-host the Santa Clara County Office of Education Inclusion Collaborative. E3 Institute has supported the Inclusion Collaborative to increase capacity throughout the county to include children of special needs by:

- Providing expertise on best practices
- Training of early educators
- Developing and distributing materials
- Coordinating with the PoP High-Risk Design Team
- Facilitating direct services to children and families in PoP demonstration sites

The Inclusion Collaborative’s activities link with Santa Clara CARES in that they directly support the training and education of early childhood educators in best practices of inclusion.

“More knowledge equals more quality. The children benefit daily from my continued learning experiences thanks to CARES.”

Julie Mullen
Family Home-based Early Educator
Santa Clara CARES Participant Rounds 1-5
Who are E3 Institute staff members?

E3 Institute staff includes leaders with decades of experience and expertise in early education. Staff qualifications reflect the breadth and depth required for successful community engagement, Santa Clara CARES implementation, professional development, contracts and systems evolution, research, and administration. Staff diversity reflects Santa Clara County demographics and is culturally and linguistically responsive to the community as well as multilingual in English, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

The staff has grown from its original three members who launched the organization to a roster of 18 full-time employees in the first five years.

What does the future hold for Santa Clara CARES?

In the first five years of the Santa Clara CARES’ existence, the E3 Institute has experienced a heightened awareness of the importance of early educators’ professional development and its direct impact on quality learning experiences for children. E3 Institute will continue to develop and implement innovative professional development activities that will contribute to the quality and growth of preschool services. As quality continues to be a priority for the state of California, the E3 Institute will play a critical role to support the development and coordination of such efforts.

E3 Institute will continue to convene Santa Clara CARES collaborative efforts, as well as continue to build on existing services and resources. In this regard, E3 Institute will ensure that the growth and improvement of services are efficiently and effectively implemented.

E3 Institute will continue to make data-driven decisions and apply evidence-based practices in implementing Santa Clara CARES. Santa Clara County has experienced systemic changes on the college and university campuses that reflect a commitment to better meet the needs of the early education field. Early childhood educators, in turn, will continue to show progress toward educational attainment due to the support they receive through Santa Clara CARES and its college and university partners.

To build upon the success of the Santa Clara CARES program, E3 Institute affirms its commitment to the following areas for the next five years:

- Counseling, advising, and communication
- Supports for English-language learners
- BA degree options
- Leadership development
- Systems reform

The Santa Clara CARES program has been recognized as an effective support to early educators. The development of cohorts at the colleges has enabled E3 Institute to evaluate the effectiveness of the classes that have been tailored to meet their specific needs. E3 Institute will continue to publish reports to illustrate projects offered to early educators that can be considered for policy changes at the state level.
Santa Clara CARES Community

E3 Institute wishes to acknowledge the following organizations for their contributions to the success of Santa Clara CARES' first five years of implementation.

American Institutes for Research (AIR) • AMH Consultants • Anne E. Casey Family Foundation • Arts Council Silicon Valley • Asociación de Proveedoras Hispneas del Condado de Santa Clara • BANDTEC: Network for Diversity Training Building Equity and Social Justice for Children and Families • Bay Area Regional CARES Group • Bay Area Professional Development Collaborative (BAPDC) • Bring Me a Book Foundation • California Association of the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) • California Child Care Resource and Referral Network • California Community College Chancellor’s Office • California Department of Education, Child Development Division • California Early Childhood Mentor Program • California Early Intervention and Technical Assistance Network (CEITAN) • California FIRST 5 • California State Department of Education, Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) • California Young World • Catholic Charities Raising a Reader • Center for Employment Training (CET) • Center for Learning and Achievement (CLA) • Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE), Institute of Industrial Relations • Child Care Law Center • Child Development Policy Institute (CDPI) • Child Development Resources of Ventura County • Child Development Training Consortium (CDTC) • Children Now • Children’s Book Press • Children’s Discovery Museum • Children’s Home Society of California • Children’s Preschool Center, The Children’s Defense Fund • City College of San Francisco • City of Milpitas Child Care Program • City of Mountain View • City of San José Early Care and Education Commission • City of Sunnyvale Child Care Services • California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) • Community Child Care Council of Santa Clara County • Community College Professional Preparation Project (CCPPP) •