

# Kaleidoscope Play & Learn<sup>®</sup>

## An Evidence-Informed, Promising Practice Supporting Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers and Parents



Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups are weekly facilitated play groups for young children and their Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers and parents.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn grew out of Child Care Resources' work to provide support and information to Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers – the thousands of grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, family friends and neighbors who take care of young children while their parents are at work.

The program is based on widely recognized and accepted theories and best practices in the fields of child development; early learning; parent education; Family, Friend and Neighbor care; community development; and cultural competence. It was designated as a Promising Practice by the University of Washington's Evidence-Based Practice Institute in 2013.

### Helping Families Prepare Children for Kindergarten

Each group has a trained facilitator who plans and sets up fun, culturally- and developmentally-appropriate play activities for the children and their caregivers to participate in together. Through facilitator guidance and modeling, conversation, peer learning, and hands-on experience, caregivers learn what they can do at home to support children's learning and healthy development.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups are held in a variety of neighborhood locations, such as libraries, community centers, schools, apartment buildings and shopping centers. There are groups in different languages; some are multilingual. Most groups are free, drop-in, and open to young children of all ages.

#### Research-informed Protective Factors lead to optimal child and family well-being:

- ✓ Children's social and emotional development
- ✓ Knowledge of child development
- ✓ Social connections
- ✓ Support when needed
- ✓ Parental and caregiver resilience

### Significant, Positive Outcomes

Child Care Resources conducts ongoing evaluation measuring the outcomes caregivers experience as a result of participating in Kaleidoscope Play & Learn. Highlights from our evaluation include:

- **70.6% of caregivers and parents reported increasing their knowledge "a lot more"** about their role in helping children be ready for school, what to expect of children of different ages, or how children learn through play
- **82% reported changing what they do with the children in their care "a lot more"**. This includes spending time talking and doing activities with the children, reading or looking at books, and helping children talk about and understand their feelings.

#### Our Theory of Change

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn provides Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers and parents with information, resources, support and connections

*so that*

Caregivers and parents provide high quality child care and healthy development

*so that*

All children receive high quality care in safe, nurturing environments and are prepared to succeed in school and life

We recently completed a multi-year Outcome Pilot Study using standardized measurement tools. The Final Report prepared by Organizational Research Services is available upon request.

## Reaching a Diversity of Families

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn reaches communities more likely to experience school preparation gaps: immigrant and refugee families, families with low incomes, and families of color.

- 49% of participants speak a language other than English at home
- 43% have low incomes (less than 200% below the poverty level for a family of 4 --\$44,000 per year)
- 61% identify themselves as a race/ethnicity other than White or as having one or more races/ethnicities in addition to White

### Quick Facts

- 80+ weekly groups
- 35 community organizations
- 8 different languages
- 3,000+ unduplicated participating families
- 50% groups conducted in languages other than English

## Child Care Resources: Home of the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Model

During the last 10 years, Child Care Resources has worked with over 100 community partners – including community-based social service organizations, public agencies, and private funders -- to develop the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn model using knowledge gleaned from formal outcomes evaluation as well as practice in the field. To support the quality and replication of Kaleidoscope Play & Learn in King County and beyond, Child Care Resources provides:



- Guidelines and standards
- Outcomes evaluation
- Facilitator training
- Materials, including the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Planning Handbook & Tool Kit* and the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Caregiver Learning Handbook & Lesson Guides*
- Consultation and technical assistance on planning and implementation

## Community Partners Throughout Washington State

Community organizations, schools, libraries and faith-based communities across the state have embraced the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn model. Organizations providing the program commit to offering groups in accordance with the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines and participate in evaluation and other quality assurance activities to ensure fidelity to the model. Our community partners offer groups which meet weekly from Ferndale to Spokane and places in between.

## For More Information

Please contact Lisa Conley, Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Project Coordinator at Child Care Resources at (206)329-1011, ext. 202 or via email at [conley@childcare.org](mailto:conley@childcare.org).

