



Before jet propulsion...

Before wind turbines...

Before handheld computers...

There was

**imagination.**



# WITH AN EARLY START, IMAGINATIONS **soar**



Washington's economy is rich with opportunity. A leader in technology, software, communications, life sciences, aerospace, forest products, and more, our state was built upon innovation and imagination—and continues to be supported by a diverse and specialized workforce. The economic future of our region depends upon the nourishment of bright minds and the cultivation of big ideas. Unfortunately, not all of our students begin with an equal chance for success.

As the state's demographic trends shift, growing numbers of children live in poverty or come from immigrant families. Language barriers and economic hardship can present roadblocks to early learning opportunities. The state estimates that 75 percent of its lowest income families are not ready for kindergarten. Because they don't begin with the same skills and tools as many of their peers, these children often have difficulty achieving success in school and many never graduate. How can our state continue to be a leader in innovation if this gap continues to grow?

BPEL is a group of business and philanthropic leaders invested in closing the achievement gap. BPEL identifies young children who are most likely to start school up to two years behind and provides parents with the tools, motivation and confidence to prepare children for school. Through quantitative analysis, BPEL demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of reaching the most isolated children at an early age by going where the families are.

Currently, only about two percent of eligible families in Washington state benefit from these voluntary, research-based home visiting programs. Reaching more of these families will eventually provide Washington with the workforce it needs to be economically robust in the future. Now is the time to ensure that all children begin school ready to succeed.

BPEL-funded programs are an investment in the future of business, innovation and employment.

Imagine.



## TWO COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

# add up

## TO SUCCESS

**BPEL REACHES KIDS THAT  
AREN'T REACHED BY  
EXISTING PROGRAMS**

85% have family incomes  
of \$25,000 per year or less

35% have family incomes of  
less than \$10,000 per year

32.0% are East Asian

24.2% are African

19% are African American

12.5% are Hispanic

5.1% are Middle Eastern

2.3% are Native American

1.2% are White

3.5% are other races or  
multiracial

More than two-thirds (72%)  
speak a language other  
than English at home

28% speak an Asian  
language, including  
Vietnamese, Chinese,  
Cambodian and Cham

24% speak an African  
language, including Somali,  
Amharic, Oromo and Tigrinya

12% speak Spanish


Almost one-third of  
participants (30.9%) live  
with single parents, and  
8.6% live with teen parents

Almost two-thirds (63%) have  
at least one sibling; 8.6%  
have four or more siblings

For the past four years, the BPEL demonstration project has provided a rich foundation for early learning. BPEL integrates two complementary components that target 2- and 3-year-olds who are not enrolled in institutional education programs. Working with Neighborhood House and Atlantic Street Center, BPEL offers families the opportunity to have skilled workers come directly to the home to provide parents and primary caregivers with tools and training that enrich their children's cognitive, intellectual and social development.

**The Parent-Child Home Program** (PCHP) is a research-based early literacy and school readiness program for 2- to 4-year-olds and their parents. Paraprofessionals provide twice-weekly home visits over a two-year period and bring gifts of books and educational toys. They provide parent coaching by modeling behaviors that stimulate early learning. PCHP has proven highly successful, raising participants' high school graduation rates to those of higher-income students. PCHP also builds the "protective factors" in families that are shown to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

**Play and Learn Groups** are informal gatherings of 10-25 children and their parents led by a trained facilitator. The groups improve children's social and emotional skills, reduce isolation, and provide the essential experience of learning through play with children their own age. They also introduce children to a structured learning setting, which helps them prepare for school. Groups meet weekly at neighborhood-based locations and promote fun, interactive, educational behavior that stimulates greater verbal interaction.

 "If more families had this program, a lot would change in schools. Whole classrooms would have more knowledge, more language, and more social and emotional skills." — FARHYA, HOME VISITOR



# READY... SET... results\*

“I sit down more now with Carlos. I found ways to spend more time with him. While I do my homework for college, he sits beside me and I give him things to do that we talk about.”

– MONIQUE, PARENT

A majority of families experiences dramatic changes as a result of their participation in PCHP. Eighty percent of parents and children achieve a very high level of success at the end of the two-year program—meaning they meet the standard of desired positive behaviors on all twenty indicators assessed for each group. Ninety percent of parents and children attained that level of mastery on at least eighteen of the indicators.

Before beginning the program (at baseline), almost no parents achieved those scores on all 20 items assessed by **Parent and Child Together (PACT)**. Less than one-fifth reached this threshold at the end of the first year. However, by the end of the second year of the program, more than four-fifths of parents (82 percent) demonstrated all 20 positive parenting behaviors “most of the time” or “always.”

Results were similar for the children’s scores on the **Child Behavior Traits (CBT)**. At baseline, almost no children achieved scores of “most of the time” or “always” on all 20 items and only a handful reached this threshold at the end of the first year. However, by the end of the second year of the program, almost four-fifths (79 percent) of children demonstrated all 20 positive behaviors “most of the time” or “always.”

■ Baseline  
■ End of Year 1  
■ End of Year 2

Behaviors assessed in parents include conversational and listening skills, the ability to verbalize approval and expectations, responsiveness, the ability to give direction and encouragement, and other positive parenting behaviors.

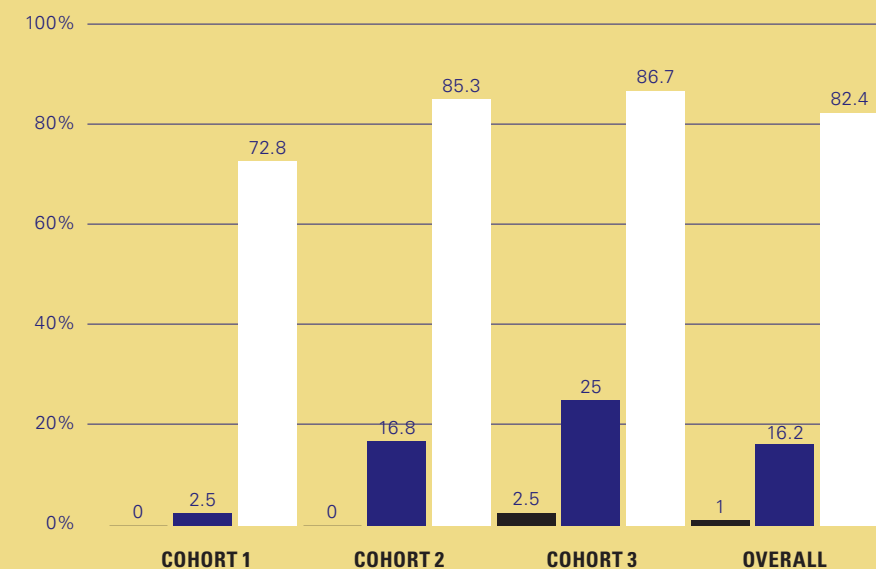
Behaviors assessed in children include attentiveness, concentration, ability to follow rules, and the ability to share and initiate interaction, participation and cooperation.

**COHORT 1** (2005-2007) includes 81 children.

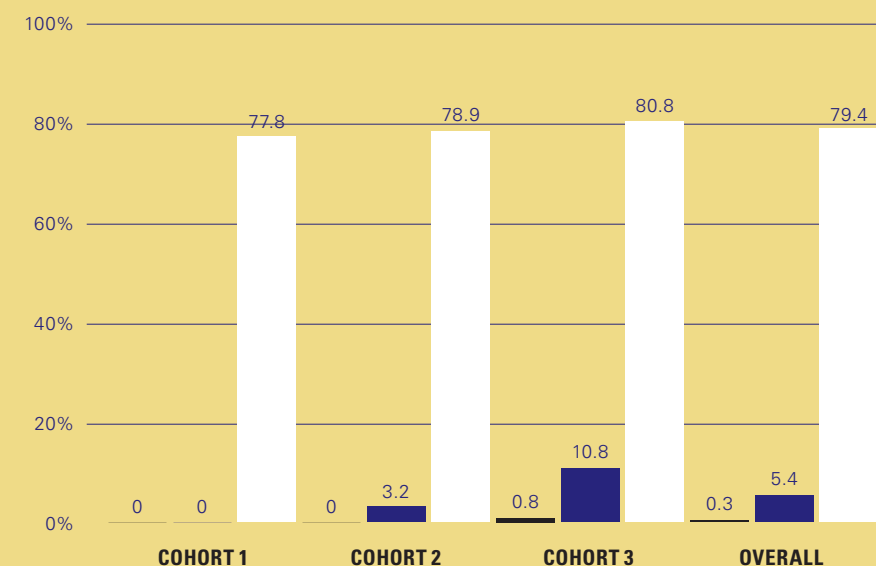
**COHORT 2** (2006-2008) includes 95 children.

**COHORT 3** (2007-2009) includes 120 children.

**PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS SCORING “MOST OF THE TIME” OR “ALWAYS” ON ALL ITEMS: PACT**



**PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN SCORING “MOST OF THE TIME” OR “ALWAYS” ON ALL ITEMS: CBT**





PARENTS AND CHILDREN

# build

## A SOLID FUTURE

During the first five years of life, a child's brain establishes patterns that support lifelong physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Nurturing strong relationships and encouraging positive interaction between parents and children help these patterns develop effectively.

Parents are children's first teachers. The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) is based on research demonstrating that education and support are as important for parents as they are for children. PCHP is designed so parents can quickly see the results of what they are learning and increase their joy in parenting. Success motivates parents to spend more time talking, reading and playing with their children—the best recipe for brain development.

The research of University of Chicago professor James Heckman—a Nobel-prize winning economist—indicates that differences in academic performance are due to the variation in parental environments that shape a young child's cognitive and socio-emotional skills. Heckman notes that the most effective policy for improving the performance of schools involves supplementing the childrearing resources of disadvantaged families who are sending their children to the schools.

PCHP prepares parents to continue to support their child's education throughout the school years, which is key to academic success. Hilda, a parent who completed PCHP with her son last spring, notes, "when my son starts school he will not be behind the other kids. This will help him graduate and get a good job. It has given him the key to learn and improve. He'll be more intelligent. I can encourage him."

BPEL is conducting a long-term evaluation that will allow us to track Hilda's prediction about her son's success and compare his performance with similar students who did not attend PCHP.

During the past year, BPEL executed a grant agreement with Seattle Public Schools (SPS) to implement this research. SPS has determined that two-thirds of PCHP graduates from the first two Seattle PCHP cohorts are now Seattle Public School students. This will provide ample data for careful study of PCHP graduates' educational advancement. No one will be watching more closely than the parents.

 "Parental involvement is the key. It is something that does not go away. Parents learn they can be involved and are not intimidated to provide what their child needs." — MARCELLA, HOME VISITOR



## STRONG COMMUNITIES

# solve TOMORROW'S PUZZLES

After four years of implementation in Seattle, PCHP has become a catalyst for community change beyond the families who are served directly. When friends and neighbors witness the success of children who have participated in PCHP, awareness that all children can learn at very young ages increases. Word of mouth about the program's success has many beneficial effects, including increased involvement of fathers in parenting. Families are also beginning to use community resources including libraries, parenting classes and ESL classes. As a result of these community changes, the need for recruitment in PCHP has dwindled.

The agencies that deliver the PCHP to families in their communities are highly qualified, offer a range of services that can assist families who ask for help in other areas, and have staff that speak the languages and are from the cultures of the families served. They are trusted and caring organizations that provide cohesion and stability, acting at times as social glue in communities that are sometimes fractured.

BPEL provides funding to two agencies:

**Atlantic Street Center** is a private, nonprofit organization founded in Seattle 100 years ago. Each year, Atlantic Street Center provides academic assistance, early literacy, parent education and support, leadership development, and mental health counseling to approximately 3,000 multiethnic, low-income families. Through its child and youth development activities and family support programs, the agency aims to build skills, strengthen families and promote self-improvement.

**Neighborhood House** was formed in 1906 to provide assistance to Jewish immigrants. It now offers comprehensive services to public housing residents and low-income individuals representing more than 27 different cultural groups and 19 different languages. Many of its clients are refugees from war, famine or political oppression. The agency's main program areas are family and social services, early childhood education, employment and adult education, youth education, community health and transportation.

The Council for Children & Families also provides funding to Neighborhood House to deliver PCHP to additional families, while the City of Seattle provides funding to Southwest Youth and Family Services to deliver PCHP in southwest Seattle.



“People know about and want this program. A woman just called who said as soon as her baby was born she wanted to get on the list so she would be sure to get a spot.” – MARCELLA, HOME VISITOR





# grow<sup>★</sup>

## TOMORROW'S BIG IDEAS TODAY

Closing the gap is possible. United Way of King County will take the bold next step.

As a champion for community change and a substantial investor in the BPEL demonstration project, United Way of King County believes that PCHP is the approach that will be most effective in strengthening early learning in King County. Beginning in mid-2010, United Way of King County will drive expansion of the PCHP.

Spurred by excitement about the accomplishments of BPEL's innovative demonstration project and the a growing understanding of how to best address early learning in King County, United Way will build on the success of PCHP to give more children a fair shot at achievement in school.

Both BPEL and United Way recognize that current investments in early learning mostly fund formal childcare and preschool programs and serve only one-third of young children. Without home visiting programs and other support for parents and the extended family members who provide child care for two-thirds of children ages birth to 5, we risk leaving thousands of children behind—bright, capable minds that must be better prepared for school if we hope to sustain a world-class workforce that is competitive and homegrown.

★ “If more families had this program, there would be a great improvement in our communities. If I could fast-forward 10 years, these kids would be on track. Kids that don't have the program will just be squeaking by and working harder.” — BELLE, HOME VISITOR

PHOTO: Alex plays with home visitor Ana and his little brother at Neighborhood House.



# YESTERDAY'S dreamers

## MAKE TOMORROW'S DREAMS POSSIBLE.



The five-year early learning demonstration project launched by the Business Partnership for Early Learning (BPEL) continues to generate success and benefits beyond those we imagined.

We are beginning the fifth and final year of the demonstration project, propelled by continued strong outcomes among both the parents and children who are participating in this research-based home visiting program.

More and more, we are seeing evidence of the excitement and confidence of parents who have chosen to enroll in the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP). Today, parents are leaders in changing their community and its schools, and helping younger siblings using the skills they gained during the two-year home visiting program. They are spreading the word about the importance of learning at the very youngest ages and participating in school activities to continue to support their children's education.

As dozens of families have enrolled in PCHP in the specific geographic and ethnic communities served, we are seeing the potential for changing community skills and wisdom in early learning. As PCHP children begin attending neighborhood elementary schools, they have the potential to change the atmosphere of entire classrooms. This bodes well for the long-term well being of children, families, schools, communities and employers.

Our generous investors have truly launched a small revolution, and are making a tremendous contribution to learning how our region and state can best provide all young children the opportunity to enter and progress through school on an even playing field.

Perhaps most importantly, the work of BPEL has inspired United Way of King County to continue to fund the PCHP programs now funded by BPEL when our demonstration project concludes next year. Based on its leadership and strong commitment to early learning, United Way also hopes to expand the program within King County over the coming years.

I hope you will continue to join me in letting others know what we have accomplished and its importance to the long-term success of our community and state.

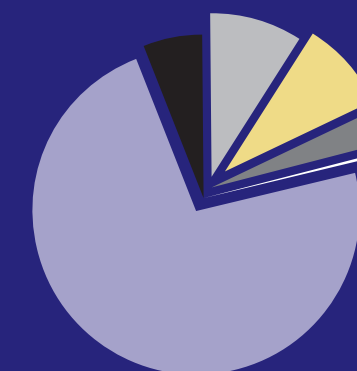
**JOHN W. STANTON**, Chairman, Business Partnership for Early Learning

“Business leaders got involved because we need to build a talented work force. We saw that early learning programs have an enormous return on investment. It just makes a compelling economic case.” – **JOHN STANTON, BPEL CHAIRMAN**

### INVESTORS:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
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Pugh Capital Management  
Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce  
Bob and Juanita Watt

### BUDGET FOR FIVE-YEAR DEMONSTRATION PROJECT SERVING 400 CHILDREN:



Parent-Child Home Program	\$2,920,000
Play and Learn	240,000
Evaluation	360,000
Staffing/Project Coordinator	320,000
Communications	152,000
Administrative costs	8,000

**TOTAL COSTS \$4,000,000**

### FY 2010 (JULY 1, 2009 TO OCTOBER 31, 2010)

Parent-Child Home Program	\$693,277
Play and Learn	19,972
Evaluation	88,150
Staffing/Project Coordinator	90,000
Communications	45,000
Administrative costs	3,000

**TOTAL COSTS \$939,399**



**“I never thought my daughter will learn. But now I learn myself how to help my daughter. I read books all the time so she can get ready to go to school.” – SOMALI-SPEAKING PARENT**

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#### **FOR INFO ON BPEL:**

Nancy Ashley  
Project Coordinator  
Heliotrope  
206-526-5671  
[nancyashley@heliotropeseattle.com](mailto:nancyashley@heliotropeseattle.com)

#### **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN INVESTING, CONTACT:**

John Stanton  
[john.stanton@trilogypartnership.com](mailto:john.stanton@trilogypartnership.com)

Molly Stearns  
The Seattle Foundation  
[m.stearns@seattlefoundation.org](mailto:m.stearns@seattlefoundation.org)

**[www.BusinessForEarlyLearning.org](http://www.BusinessForEarlyLearning.org)**