



Education Partnerships

Objective:

Support the optimal growth and development of children and youth

Strategy:

Build partnerships with local and regional education systems to enhance their programs

Why is this strategy important?

Education is provided through multiple and fragmented systems in King County, yet schools and education systems are critical in helping to support the optimal growth and development of children and youth. Partnerships with local and regional education systems allow King County to meet our regional responsibility to provide mandated countywide services, such as mental and behavioral health services in an efficient and effective manner and to help improve services system wide.

Health and education are closely linked. Healthy students learn better and educated people are more likely to be healthy. The communities and populations that experience disparities in health outcomes greatly overlap with the communities and populations that are negatively impacted by the academic achievement gap. For instance, 58.7 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native, 63.9 percent of Latino and 71 percent of African American students graduate on-time, compared to 82.7 percent of all King County students.

See additional data on educational outcomes at [Children and Youth Strategy page](#)

How is our performance?

King County helps provide children with the support they need to succeed in their education, from cradle to career. There are many examples of partnerships with educational systems that directly improve the lives of young people, supporting optimal growth and development.

Public Health services and strategies are aligned with the goal of improving health throughout the life course and impacting the ability of children to learn, graduate on time, and lead full, productive lives. Public Health efforts that include this life-course orientation and bridge impacts on health and education include Community Health Services programs such as parent-child health programs like Nurse Family Partnership, WIC and Maternity Support Services, Child Care Health, school-based health programs including school based health center, and family planning programs. Public Health's Prevention Division has five units within the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Section that all do work that impact the health of school aged children in King County, including Health Eating & Active Living, King County Asthma Program, Tobacco Prevention & Control Program, Violence & Injury Prevention Program, and Women's Health. The Communicable Disease Section also works to ensure all children are immunized.

These programs work to improve the policies, systems, and environments that impact all populations in King County, especially those with the highest health disparities. For example, one in five middle and high school students in King County is overweight or obese, so one focus is to increase access to healthy foods and physical activity.

King County services provided through the King County Department of Community and Human Services ensure that all children have the support they need to succeed in school.

Through the King County School-to-Work Program, the King County Developmental Disabilities Division partners with 16 supported employment agencies, 18 school districts, the Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Washington State Division of Developmental Disabilities, parents, students, and technical assistance and training agencies to create employment opportunities for high school students with developmental disabilities. School-to-Work helps these students gain skills and leave school with a job and a seamless transition to adult life and community support services.

The King County Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Action Plan (MIDD), funded by a portion of King County sales tax revenue, includes two partnership efforts with local schools. The Collaborative School-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Programs are delivering 13 different programs at schools throughout King County for either middle school or junior high students. Services focus on prevention, early intervention, screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment. All services align with school-wide policies and offered alternatives to traditional disciplinary responses. Schools report anecdotal decreases in disciplinary problems as a result of some of these programs.

The second school partnership funded by the MIDD Plan is the Teen Link program run by the Crisis Clinic. The program delivers trainings in schools that give teens a safe outlet to talk openly about suicide, self-harm, peer pressure, violence, gender roles, self-image, parental expectations, and even the economy. They are also teach youth skills in helping their friends through life's ups and downs. The program includes training for adults to improve their crisis resolution and suicide intervention skills.

Moving forward

King County will continue to work with school districts and educational systems to provide efficient and effective services that support the optimal growth and development of children and youth and to define its regional role in youth and family service systems.

Related Links

[The Road Map Project--a community-wide effort aimed at improving education to drive dramatic improvement in student achievement](#)

[Public Health Seattle-King County partnerships and coalitions](#)

[King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division](#)

Technical Notes

Program data for Public Health Seattle-King County provided by Public Health, based on King County Board of Health staff report prepared by Maria Carlos and TJ Cosgrove, BOH Briefing number: 12-B13, September 20, 2012.