

# Child Welfare & Early Learning Navigator Project (CWELN)

Virtual

Original Date: August 28, 2020 | Revised Date: April 18, 2022

[www.dcyf.wa.gov](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov)

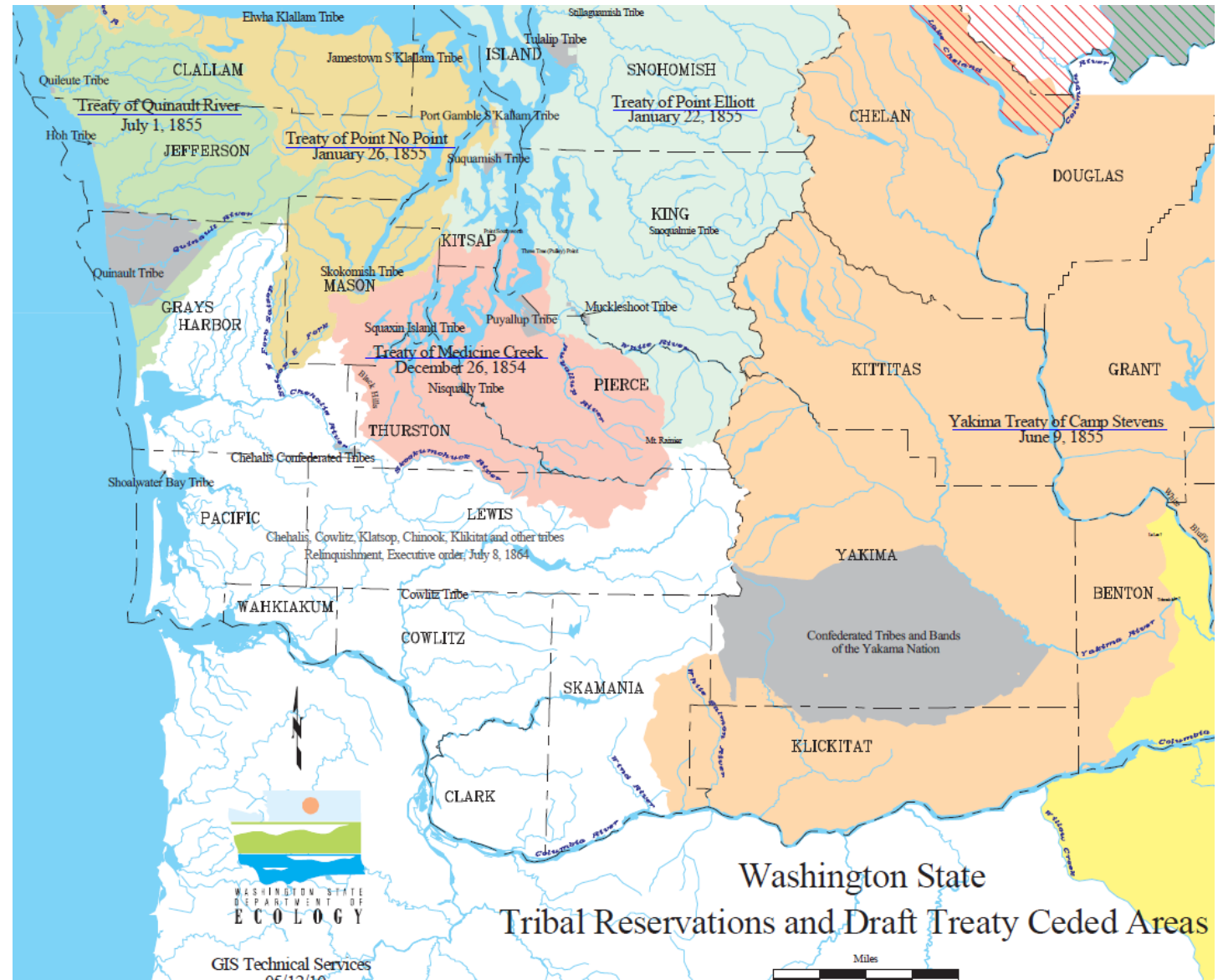


Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

# Bless This Land, Beyond The Land Acknowledgement

*Erin Mountain- Ancestral Land of the  
Nisqually and Cowlitz peoples.*

*Antonia Bancroft (Dine)-Ancestral lands of  
the Cowlitz, Confederated Tribes of Grande  
Ronde and Confederated Tribes of Siletz  
Indians.*



# Agenda

- Where did the CWELN Project come from?
- What is a Child Welfare Early Learning Navigator?
- Why does Early Learning matter in Child Welfare?
- What have we learned so far?
- What's next?
- Resources





# Child Welfare Early Learning Navigator Project (CWELN)

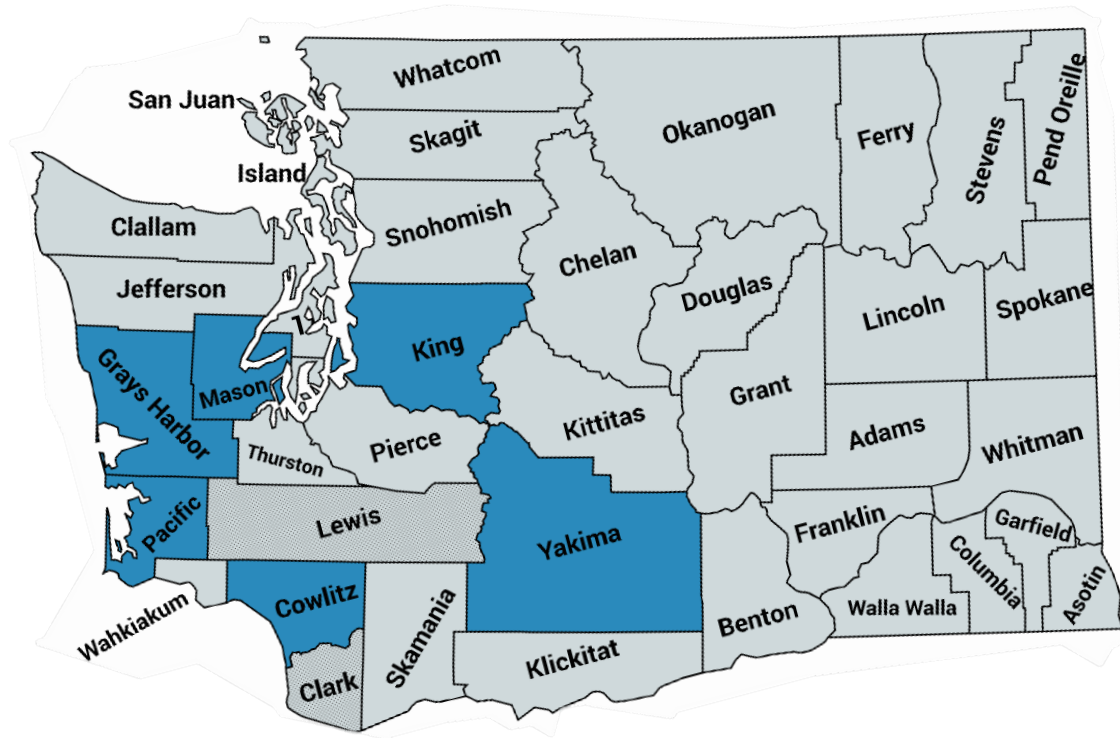
- DCYF was awarded the Federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)
- Initial Grant was awarded in 2018
- Renewed in 2019 through the end of December 2022

# Project Goals

- Overall goal is to improve and strengthen the pathway from Child Welfare to Community Early Learning programs.
  - ✓ Increase engagement in early learning and family support services among CPS-involved families.
  - ✓ Prevent subsequent maltreatment among CPS-involved families and prepare vulnerable children for academic success.
  - ✓ Help DCYF fulfill its mandate by linking child welfare and early learning functions.
  - ✓ Identify & refine solutions to be scaled out state wide.



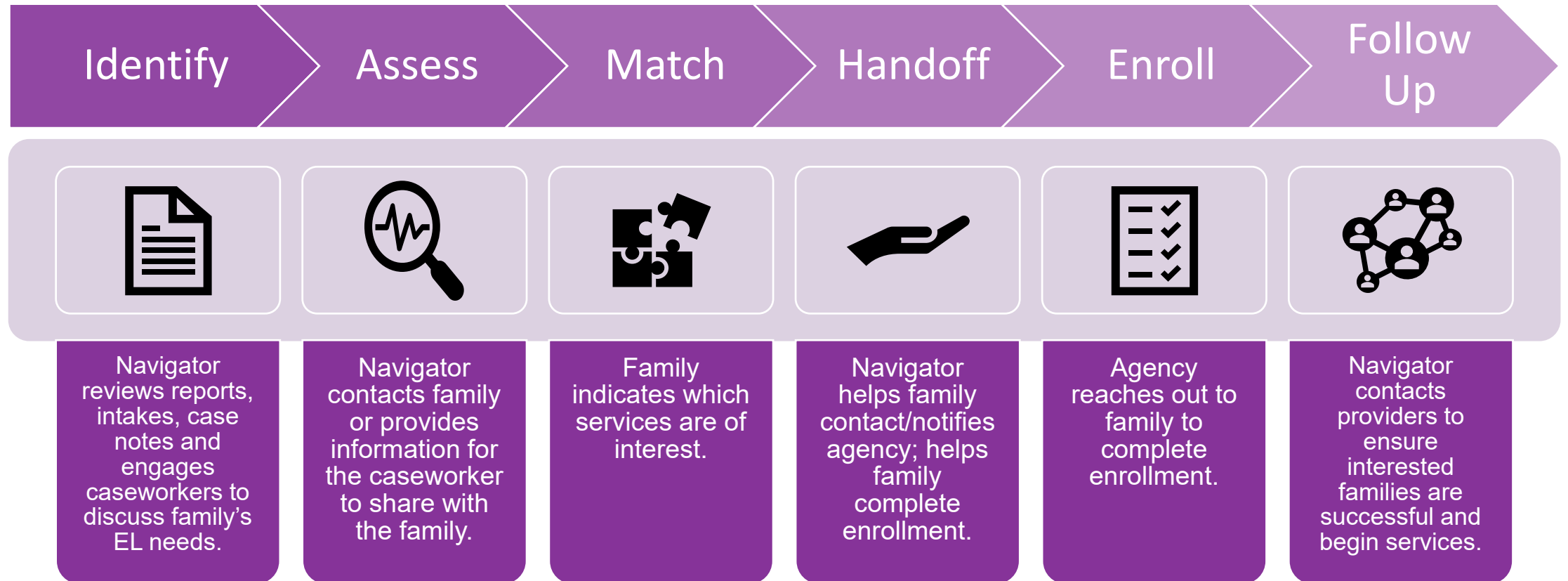
# Child Welfare Early Learning Navigators



Six navigators working with different DCYF child welfare field offices across various communities, including:

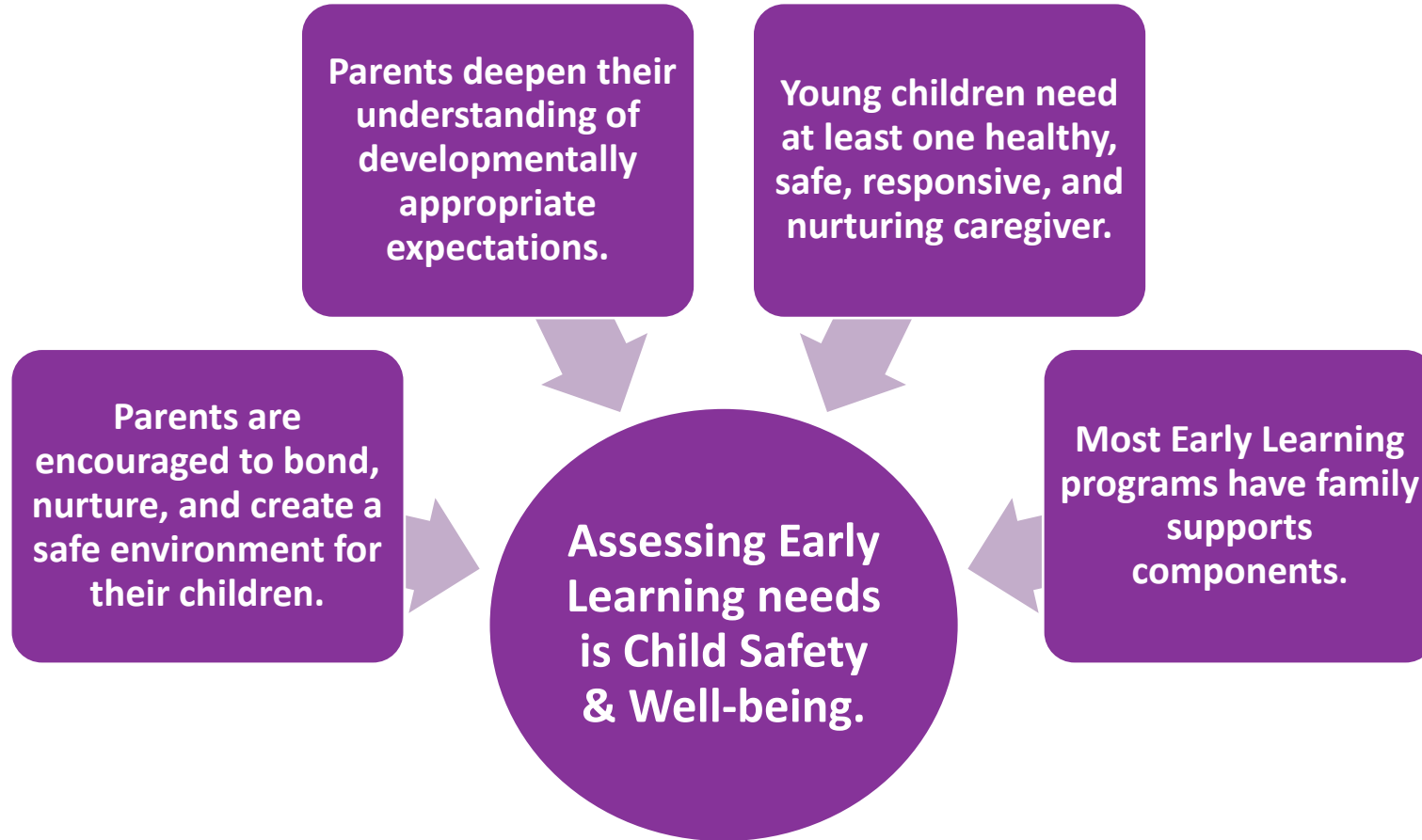
- 2-South King County
- 2-Yakima County
- 1-Grays Harbor, Mason, & Pacific Counties
- 1-Cowlitz County (Tribal Navigator)

# A Day in the Life of a Navigator





# Why Does Early Learning Matter in Child Welfare?







## What we have learned so far

- Service referral gap for child welfare involved families.
- Building relationships is very important.
- Timely follow up is crucial.
- Getting a child enrolled can sometimes be a lengthy process.



## CHILDREN ASSESSED FOR EARLY LEARNING NEEDS



### 2021: NEEDS MET BY RESOURCE



In 2021, more than 4,700 families involved in child welfare were assessed for early learning needs; 44% of these families had their early learning needs met.



## What is next?

- Navigators continue to build materials and training to inform child welfare staff about early learning programs and how to access them.
- Continue to build relationships with community and state Early Learning partners.
- Working within our agency to add to our current FAMLINK database
  - Prompts for caseworkers
  - Change service referral process
- Continue to expand the project to a statewide scale.





# Thank you!

## Resources:

- CWELN Fact Sheet
- Conversation Guide and Matrix
- Article: Connecting families involved in child protective services to early learning programs and family supports in Washington
- <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/pdg>

