

2022-2023

Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) ECHO Project Impact Report

Project period: January 1, 2022-December 31, 2023

For more information and to partner: info@azaeyc.org

This project was made possible thanks to federal coronavirus relief funding awarded to the State of Arizona and The Governor's Office and allocated by the Arizona House Democratic Caucus. Read the press release [here](#).



About the Project

1

[Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children](#) (AzAEYC), in collaboration with community partners, provided 5 virtual series of job-embedded workforce development training for early care and education (ECE) professionals focused on developmentally appropriate practices (DAP). Using the Project ECHO® model, we **expanded access to learning opportunities for child care workers in ECE programs across Arizona**. Any Arizona licensed, certified, and military or tribal regulated child care program was eligible to register. Priority registration was targeted to programs that committed all their staff to participate, accredited centers, and rural providers. Session topics included principles of child development, effective teacher interactions, and quality early learning environments that support children’s optimal development.

The need: In 2021, a [national survey](#) conducted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) showed that 84% of Arizona’s child care centers were experiencing a staffing shortage . Nearly 45% said it was more difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff at the time compared to before the pandemic.

As a result, investments were needed in **workforce development to help retain the current child care workforce** and recruit qualified preschool educators to fill the staffing shortage. In turn, this would provide consistent care for Arizona’s families and ensure providers were meeting the diverse needs of young children in healthy, developmentally appropriate ECE environments.

About the Project ECHO® Model

Project ECHO® (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) began at University of New Mexico. Initially focused on medical education and care delivery, the model has evolved into a learning framework that applies across disciplines, including ECE. This innovative model improves health and educational outcomes, aiming to **demonopolize knowledge** and **increase local capacity by sharing knowledge** through an “all teach, all learn” approach.

The Arizona Early Childhood Professional Development Collaborative, in partnership with Arizona State University College of Health Solutions, coordinates early childhood Project ECHO® sessions in Arizona. Learn more at chs.asu.edu/project-echo.

www.azaeyc.org/dap-echo

About DAP

Developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) are the foundation on which quality early learning is built. DAP are methods that early childhood educators use to promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning. DAP recognize and support each individual child, family, and teacher as a valued member of the learning community. As a result, to be developmentally appropriate, practices must also be culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate for each child.

The 4th edition of the book *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8* was published by NAEYC in 2021. It reflects new research that underscores the importance of social and cultural influences on human development and elevates the need for **active engagement through play, exploration, and inquiry** in ways that support the whole child.

Based on what the research says about child development, how children learn, and effective practices—as well as what professional experience tells the field about intentional teaching—the DAP book provides a thorough discussion of the core considerations, principles, and guidelines that inform educators' decision-making.

Readers will find extensive examples of **effective approaches for teaching children across the early years** as well as specific examples for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and children in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade. Learn more at www.naeyc.org/dap.



Our Project Partners

We extend our gratitude to the collaborating partners that helped make this project a success, including the Arizona Early Childhood Professional Development Collaborative, Arizona State University College of Health Solutions, Paradise Valley Community College, Arizona Early Childhood Education Association, Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children, Southwest Human Development, and the early childhood professionals who served as facilitators, presenters, and planning team members.

Impact At-a-Glance

\$570,000
in funding

Available under this grant award
for the project period

35
training sessions

Provided through 5 series of
7 sessions each

206
participants

Completed the series
(exceeded our goal of 200
participants)

2,987
children

Benefited from what
participants learned (exceeded our
goal of 1,500 children)

3,250
hours

Of training, coaching, and
technical assistance provided to
participants

\$41,986
of classroom materials

Were purchased for
participants to use with children
to enhance quality early learning





The DAP ECHO series **reached early childhood educators and child care providers in five of Arizona's 15 counties**: Maricopa, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, and Pinal Counties.

The DAP ECHO series **served participants in a variety of diverse child care settings**, including 2 family child care providers, 5 center-based child care providers, 25 district-based sites, 3 Head Start/Early Head Start sites, and 4 faith-based child care providers.

Participant Benefits

All participants in the DAP ECHO Project received the following benefits and incentives to support their ongoing professional development and contribute to their workforce retention.



Training Stipend

Each participant received a stipend of up to \$300 as paid professional development time



Training Credit

Each participant received up to 18 hours of professional development certification



Professional Membership

Each participant received a \$30 NAEYC Entry-Level membership to access professional resources



Books & Publications

Each participant received a copy of the 4th Edition of the *Developmentally Appropriate Practices* book



Classroom Materials

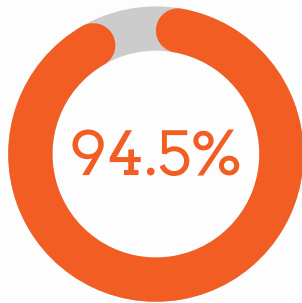
Each participant received a budget of \$150 to purchase quality, engaging early learning materials



Coaching & Assistance

Participants had access to individualized coaching to connect what they learned in training with their teaching practices

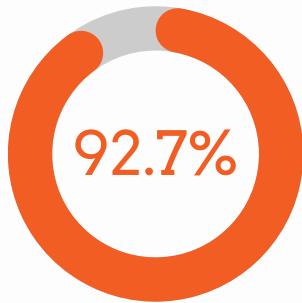
Participant Outcomes



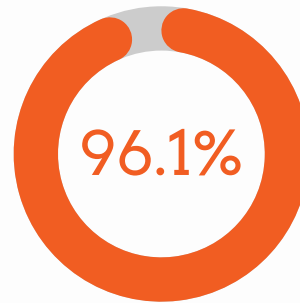
94.5% retention rate of staff from start to end of series (exceeded our goal of 75%)



94.6% of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were satisfied with the training sessions (exceeded our goal of 90%)



92.7% of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they learned from the presentations, discussions, and homework.



96.1% of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they will implement practices they learned during the sessions in their early learning setting

Participant Experience Feedback

“They were very informative sessions, and **the topics were thought-provoking**. Thank you for this opportunity. **It was very beneficial.**”

- Faith-based early childhood educator, series #5

“The planning team created an **online learning community** and the space where the voices and perspectives of the participants were included and where shared learning happened.”

- Family child care provider, series #3

“This has really helped me **develop the way I approach my teaching** and treat each child as a [unique] person.”

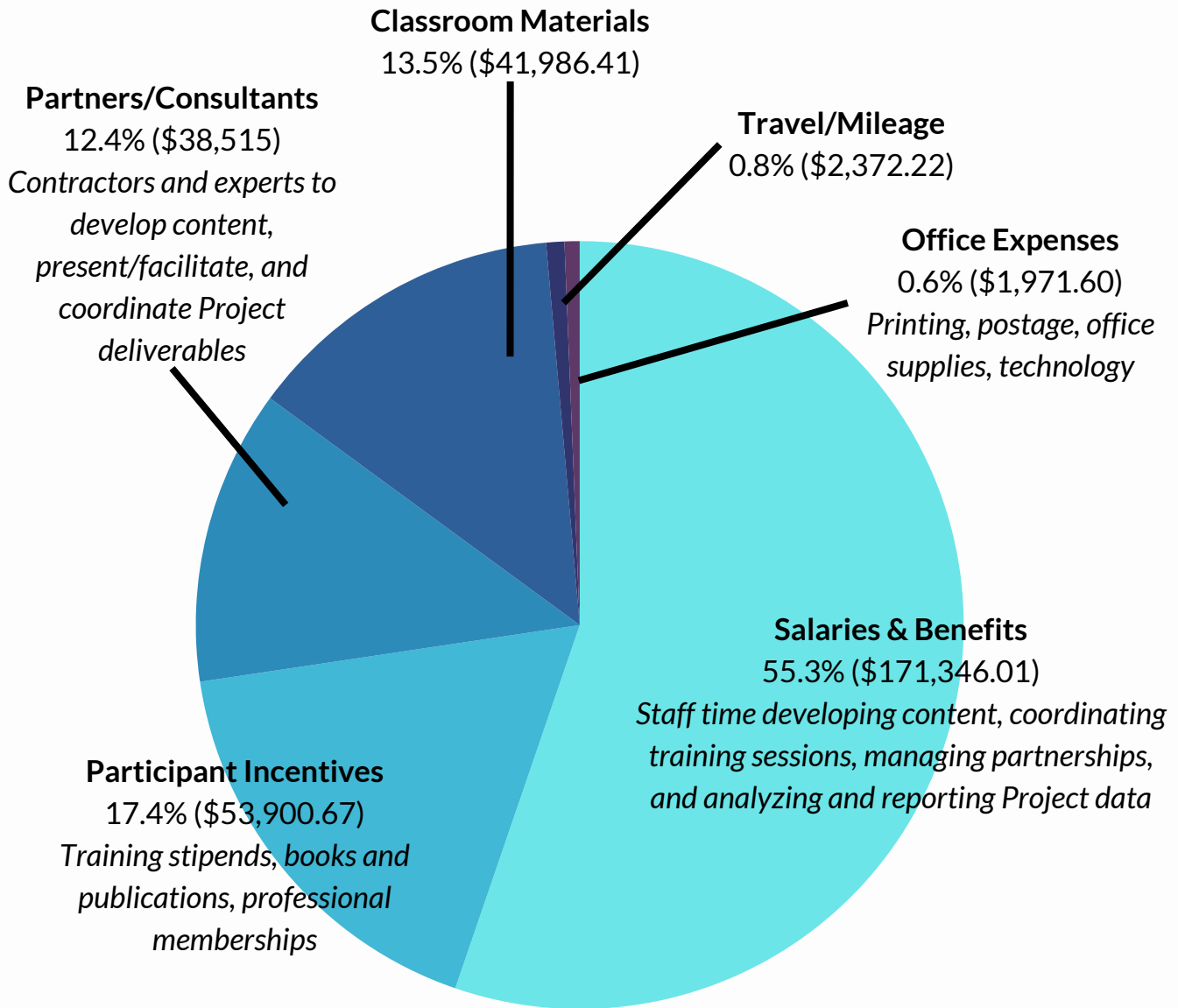
- District-based early childhood educator, series #2

“I see my staff improving in managing their classroom with **more joyful learning** experiences.”

- Child care director, series #1

Project Expenses

This chart represents the total expenditures of the DAP ECHO Project between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023. Nearly 1/2 (44%) of the expenses went directly to the participating child care providers as a workforce development and retention strategy, expert trainers, and partner organizations.



Total Expenses: \$310,091.91

Note: Up to \$570,000 was available in the grant award for this Project.



azaeyc

Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children

An Affiliate of **naeyc**