



Spring 2023 Newsletter

Proudly funded by



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Save the Date

Are you looking to help increase enrollment? Join a conversation with fellow child care providers and receive tips and tools to help market your program. On **Saturday, July 29 2023 at 10am.**

GET HELP WITH:

- ✓ Social Media Templates
- ✓ Enrollment & Hiring Graphics
- ✓ Messages to Parents
- ✓ And more!



Sign up today! Give us a call, send us a text, or email.



253-345-9206

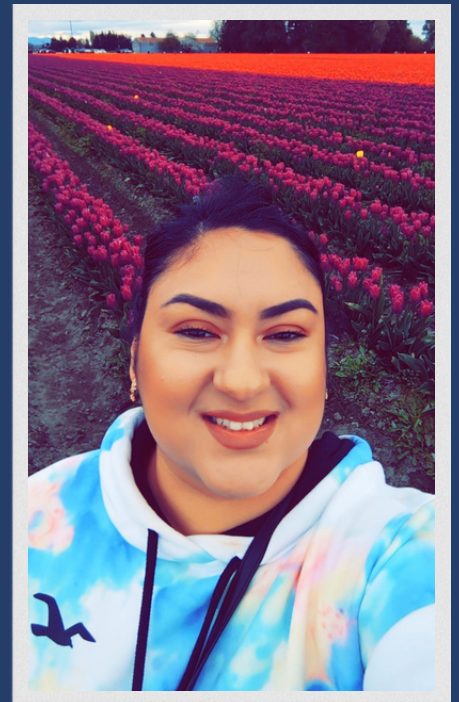


communications@childcareawarewa.org

COACH & PROVIDER HIGHLIGHT

Elizabeth Zuniga-Flores *Bilingual Early Achievers Provider*

This quarter, we are spotlighting **Elizabeth Zuniga-Flores** from Little Big World Child Care. During the pandemic Elizabeth saw the need for childcare providers in her community. This motivated her to change careers and start working in Early Childhood Education, leaving her job of 14 years. Elizabeth is happy to have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of young children and their families by providing quality experiences that encourage positive outcomes for children's health, well-being, and learning. Her career change has been the best decision she has ever made!



How does completing video highlights help support your growth as a provider?

The best thing is it allows me to see myself interacting with my kids and think about what I need to improve on. I take time to reflect: being able to see it from an outside perspective has been a game changer.

What are the benefits of video highlights?

It's a straightforward process, the hardest part was doing the first video. I had to find the courage to do it, I do not like taking photos/videos of myself and posting them. But soon I realized it's not so much about being on video but instead showing what I do daily. It's worth doing and being recognized.

Can you share your experience working with your coach Ariana?

Ariana is someone I can turn to if I have questions or need guidance. She is knowledgeable and dependable, I truly appreciate Ariana as a coach. She always encourages me to continue with my education and my goals. She reminds me that there is no goal too big. She encourages me to continue moving forward with my quality recognition and makes new things like video highlights easy to understand and to accomplish.

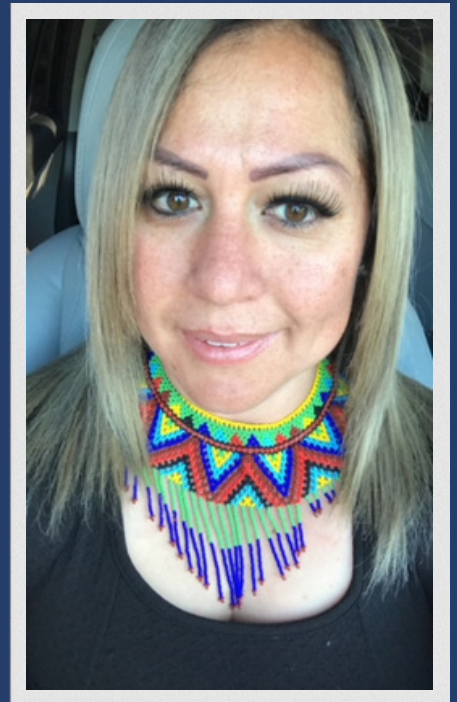
Any advice for new providers?

Don't be scared of Video Highlights! It's great to see the report once it comes back and read feedback that helps you improve. Once you get going, you'll see how important they are!

Ariana Salazar

Bilingual Early Achievers Coach

We also had the opportunity to speak to Elizabeth's bilingual Early Achievers Coach. Ariana has been a bilingual Early Learning Coach with Child Care Aware of Northwest for seven years. She has also been an instructor of ECE classes in Spanish at Skagit Valley College since 2020. The need each provider has varies and can be unique, and Ariana's experience, knowledge and skills have come in handy for helping them. She promotes hands-on activities to help keep children engaged.



What are the benefits of video highlights in comparison to the previous data collection process?

Video highlights completely changed the process for the better. Before someone would spontaneously pop in for 2 days and review providers teaching and the facility. It could interrupt the flow of the day. Now providers can record themselves teaching on their own time and in a day-to-day environment. Once they are done, they can review the video and I sit down with them for the review. I ask them guiding questions to help them grow as individuals. They reflect on the interactions and have the ability to re-do it. Once the video comes back, we review the rating together and see what the areas for growth are. We then look for trainings available in those areas.

How does completing video highlights help support growth in providers?

It's a motivator for them. They can remake the video if they think they need to do better based on how the children learned and how the children acted in the video. They themselves make that decision after reviewing their video and reflecting.

How do you promote video highlights with your providers?

We have other providers during our Spanish PLC share their success stories on Video Highlights with about 25-35 other providers in the area.

What's one impact you've seen because of video highlights?

A provider submitted her first video. I called her and asked if we could make an appointment to review the results. The day I arrived for my visit, she welcomed me with a bouquet of flowers and said, "Thank you coach for always supporting me". In her results she achieved "Advanced" in the majority of the areas. I felt happy for her. I asked her if she could encourage other providers who were afraid to send their videos in. She came to talk about her experiences during our PLC meeting that we have every month.

Connect with your Early Learning Coach

Looking for someone who can support your goals and offer tips and strategies to improve child outcomes and professional growth? Learn more about ways to improve the care you give, your business performance, or your family engagement practices. Relationship-based professional development (RBPDP) coaches give you one-on-one support and offer a wide array of customizable coaching services.

[FIND YOUR
COACH HERE](#)



FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

There are many early learning providers across the state doing amazing work for our children and families in a variety of ways! In this newsletter, we are spotlighting some of the work that has been done in the Skagit Valley area with [Farm to Early Care and Education \(Farm 2 ECE\)](#).

“Farm to ECE promotes health and well-being and increased access to healthy foods through a collection of strategies that are centered in experiential learning and family and community engagement. Three key strategies of farm to ECE are: local procurement, gardening, and food, nutrition, and agriculture education.”



From 2020-2022, several early learning programs in the Skagit Valley area worked with lead coaching staff, Delenee Brugman, and her coaching team, from Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington ([Opportunity Council](#)) in partnership with [Viva Farms](#) to bring this amazing learning experience to children and families. The early learning coaches, who support Spanish- and English-speaking programs in Skagit, were instrumental in engaging providers in the wonderful benefits of gardening and healthy eating. They engaged 39 providers and as a result, got hundreds of children gardening, tasting new fruits and vegetables, cooking, and eating foods they grew.

The Farm 2 ECE program originated from [USDA Farm to School](#) grant funding that Viva Farms expanded to early learning programs during COVID because schools were largely closed or difficult to access.



Viva Farms provides fresh local produce for taste tests and classroom activities as well as seeds and technical assistance to sites with gardens. Their work began in a Head Start program, expanded to the Mount Vernon School District (serving predominantly children with English as their second language), and grew to reach Latina-led private child care facilities as well. They have been able to partner with over 30 sites in the area.

FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

Many community partners were involved in the work in the Skagit Valley area as well, providing different components of the program:



WSU Extension provided recipes and education using Harvest for Healthy Kids curriculum.

WA State Dept. of Health provided educational materials that align with Harvest for Healthy Kids curriculum.



United General helped establish gardens in the Latina-owned early learning programs.

“I want them to be proud of what their parents do, that food is an essential part of community and society, and farmers and farmworkers should be respected and uplifted and represented in a positive light.”

An important part of this project is bringing cultural learning to the table. Some of the children participating in the program are the children of farmers. Viva Farms believes it is important to highlight the work that these farmers do.

Want to Learn More?

Learn more about implementing farm to ECE in your center by taking the online [Farm to ECE provider training](#) for 2 STARS credits.

[Washington State Farm to ECE Network](#) - Join the network to connect with farm to ECE partners throughout the state.

[Funding Farm to School](#) - National Farm to School Network's Fact Sheet to learn more about funding your farm to ECE program.

[The Washington Food & Farm Finder](#) can help you find local farm hubs in your area.