

Duluth Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

Mission Statement

To strengthen families through the education and support of all parents to provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children.

History

Minnesota ECFE program is the largest and oldest statewide family support and education program for young children and their families in the country. Duluth ECFE started with grant status in 1977 and was one of the 12 pilot projects in the state. ECFE is the largest and oldest program of its kind and has been cited as a national model for parent education and family support.

Mandates

- Universal access for all families
- Nominal fees – sliding fee, waived if family is unable to pay
- Parents and children participate together – some parent-only groups can be offered
- Local site advisory councils, Citywide advisory council with majority of participating parents
- Licensed early childhood and parent educators, *MN is the only state to license Parent Educators

Funding Source

State and local levy, grants, parent fees

Formula based on census count of children from birth to 4 years, 11 months of age, funding increase follows K12 formula increases.

ECFE Program Description

ECFE is a *universal access* program, i.e. any parent can attend with their child(ren) from birth through four years of age. Districts who have a P3 plan in place can opt to offer parenting education into the elementary years. Program offerings include: parent education, early childhood education, activity and book lending libraries, home visits and collaborations with other community agencies to provide additional comprehensive services.

Ages served in Duluth

Parents and children from prenatal through 4 years of age, and Circle of Security groups offered to any parent, caregiver, educator interested regardless of age of children.

Objectives:

- Reach all families as early as possible in a variety of ways.
- Keep a balance of center-based programs and special or target-based programs to serve diverse populations.
- Maintain geographic distribution of programming to serve all families throughout the district.
- Maintain visibility in the community through multiple public relations efforts.

Assessments used

Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) as well Ages and Stages Questionnaire (all areas) are used as a conversation tool twice each year (November/March) with parents about concerns and goals they may have for their children. Staff connect families to district and community resources as needed.

Curriculum

Minnesota Parent Education Core Curriculum for ECFE Programs

5 Developmental Domains: Parent Development, Parent-Child Relationship, Child Development, Family Development, Culture and Community, Circle of Security Parenting, as well as various resources available

MN Early Childhood Indicators of Progress are used to guide the early childhood curriculum

“Seat time” of Programs

Most ECFE classes are weekly 1 ½ hours long, (20/21 1 hr due to covid safety/cleaning). Collaborative programs vary in length of time. Home visits are typically one hour. Outreach programs are offered and evaluated as needed, see pg 2.

Duluth Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

Number of Participants	2019-2020	
	Children	Parents
Classes	477	548 (416 mothers/132 fathers/2 other)
Home Visits	218	130
Amazing Newborn Hospital Visits	1013	1825

*In March of 2020, COVID-19 sent our schools into a Distance Learning model. All data above denotes September thru March 16th records. After March 16th, Amazing Newborn Hospital Visits ceased. Families in classes and home visits were served via virtual classes, virtual one on one visits, phone calls, texts, personal postcards in the mail, Facebook posts, activity kits dropped off on porches and drive by grab & go methods.

*As of March 2021 current enrollment is roughly one third of a typical year, however staff have reported deep impact with the families served and have gone above and beyond to stay in contact with families past and present. This number does not denote families engaged with early in the year who have dropped for various reasons.

Number of Participants	2018-2019**	
	Children	Parents
Classes	522	652
Home Visits	403	247
Amazing Newborn Hospital Visits	1369	2463
Special Events	685	595

Number of Participants -	2017-2018	
	Children	Parents
Unduplicated count	697	669
Classes and/or Home Visits	1455	2692
Total number of Participants	2152	3361

**Denotes 2018/2019 MDE changed method of recording enrollments. 2018 and beyond is internal data.

ECFE Family Center Locations –

Piedmont Elementary Lester Park Elementary Stowe Elementary Washington Center

Duluth ECFE also serves families at: *COVID has affected our ability to perform these outreach efforts to the same degree as in the past, but we are committed to maintaining relationships and resume when possible.

Essentia and St. Luke’s Hospitals Shelter/transitional housing outreach Home Visits
 Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCC), currently online Life House

Other Special Programs/Partnerships Offered by Duluth ECFE

First Year Program (for first time parents of infants with limited support)	Foster/Adoptive Parenting
Amazing Newborn Prenatal Class at Essentia & St Luke’s	Online Parenting Field Trips & Events
Mentorship with In-home Childcare Providers	ECFE to GO/See Saw ECFE in the Park

New Partnerships 21/22 with The Northland Foundation

Family Navigator Partner Site Family, Friend & Neighbor (FFN) Caregiver Project

Staff

20/21 - 10 Certified Staff, 5 non-licensed