





Supporting NH's Early Childhood Workforce


Throughout 2020 to 2023, the NH renewal Preschool Development Grant (NH PDG) was a collaboration between the [University of New Hampshire \(UNH\)](#), NH's [Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#), NH's [Department of Education \(NHED\)](#), and the [Council for Thriving Children](#). NH PDG made substantial contributions to statewide efforts to improve the quality of early care and education programs by offering early childhood educators coaching, training and other supports. This brief presents **two highlighted initiatives** NH PDG funded in support of this goal, the **key successes** of each initiative, **future opportunities**, and **relevant findings from the evaluation of the grant**.

Play-Based Learning

NH PDG funded coaching and professional development to support the successful implementation of play-based learning best practices.

 **Funded the Early Childhood Initiative**, a broad-based body of work led by the NH PDG Early Learning Coaching Team to promote best practices in play-based learning, create and disseminate resources to educators in the early childhood care and education field, provide individual coaching and professional development to teachers on effective play-based strategies, and host region-level opportunities for providers to collaborate.

 **Trained kindergarten teachers and early childhood providers** across the state to implement play-based learning practices, reaching one-third of all NH school districts and multiple cohorts of infant and toddler teachers.

 UNH and the Early Learning Coaching Team will **continue to support programs and schools across the state to incorporate play-based learning strategies** into classroom practices.

 Teachers receiving play-based training and coaching **reported positive experiences**.

Students in classrooms that received play-based training and coaching:

- **Were more likely to be involved in learning activities in the classroom.**
- **Talked more and used more manipulatives during learning activities.**

NH PDG Early Learning Coaching in NH Schools





Quality Improvement in Early Childhood Programs

NH PDG collaborated with DHHS on multiple efforts across the state to support quality improvement in early childhood programs.

☀️ **Expanded access to and enhanced supports for the evidence-based Pyramid Model** through partnership with the Pyramid Model Consortium, which funded and maintained a Master Cadre of trainers and coaches and launched 14 new Pyramid Model implementation sites.

☀️ **Contributed to the development and launch of Granite Steps for Quality (GSQ)**, the state's Quality Recognition and Improvement System for early childhood programs comprising multiple pathways for programs to document quality improvement, including Pyramid Model and Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Pathways.

☀️ **Supported ERS Pathway programs transitioning to the GSQ** by partnering with Southern New Hampshire Services and ACROSS NH to conduct ERS assessments in early care and education as well as afterschool programs.

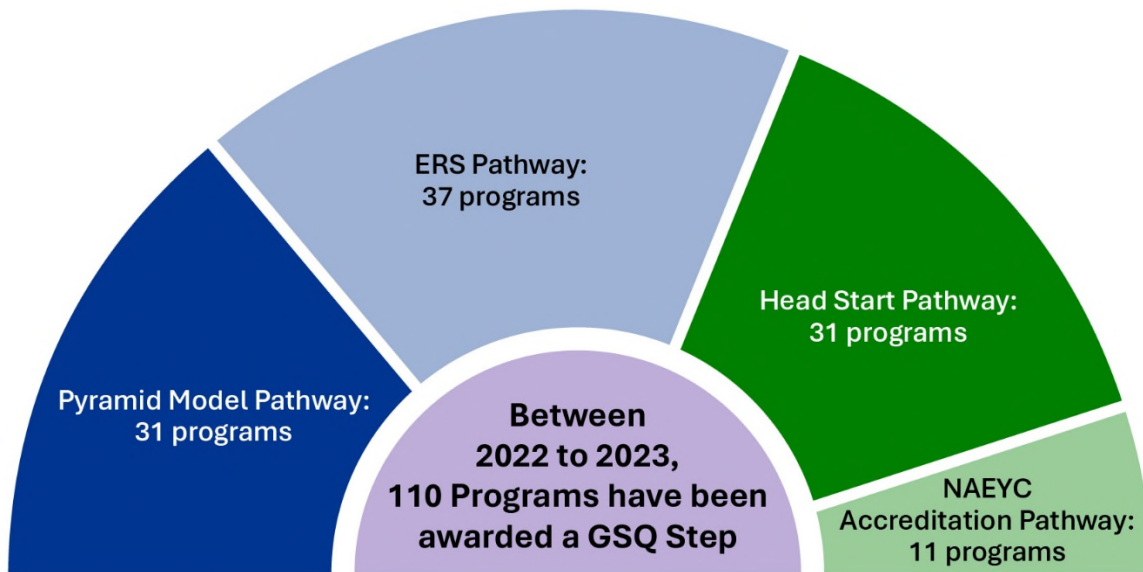
☀️ **Supported early childhood mental health practitioners and family child care providers** through subgrants for early childhood service coordination efforts and program quality improvements.



DHHS will **maintain and continue enhancing the supports embedded within the GSQ** through the GSQ Capacity Building Project led by Keene State College's Behavioral Health Improvement Institute and the Pyramid Model Consortium.



With critical NH PDG support, **multiple pathways for programs to assess and improve quality** were established. In addition, the new GSQ system also provides financial incentives for participation and/or continuous program improvement.



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