

Family-School-Community

Partnering

Wild Plum Center for Young Children and Families
Longmont, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Beginning family-school partnering activities early in children’s lives is important to student achievement, even if children are not yet in a traditional school setting. An example of beginning partnering work early is the Wild Plum Center for Young Children and Families, responsible for delivering Head Start and Early Head Start programs to 263 students (age birth to five) and expectant mothers in Longmont, CO. The program provides a comprehensive and individualized approach to early childhood education and family wellness.

This program is fully committed to a partnership model to support children, families, and the whole community. Wild Plum believes that families are the first teachers of students, and because of that believe that it is critical to develop relationships with families. Teachers and family service staff are assigned to specific families in order to build these relationships, and each family is partnered with an educator who conducts a home visit every week. The program also offers a home-based program for expecting mothers and families with children birth to three.

In addition to the support given by the school staff, Wild Plum invites their families to attend group gatherings twice a month. During these gatherings, educational activities are provided and parent discussions take place. This allows for families to share with each other in a comfortable setting. The group gatherings support the development of family created goals towards health, self-sufficiency, mental health, and relationship building. The program also works diligently to connect their families to outside resources that they may benefit from.

Wild Plum believes that the key to creating lasting benefits for a child is through strong, trusting, school-readiness focused relationships with the family. They maintain that ideal throughout their programming, and strive to support the whole child as well as community and family.