Ensuring All Colorado Children are Valued, Healthy and Thriving.

A panel discussion hosted by the Early Childhood Colorado Partnership, Marsico Institute at the University of Denver and Qualistar Colorado.
We asked tonight’s panelists ... What is a promising solution to ensure all of Colorado’s children are valued, healthy and thriving?

**Stacy Howard, PhD**
"We are given a small window of opportunity to pay attention and nurture our youngest children. When a child’s earliest years are not only embraced, but also valued, we can guarantee that she thrives. As a unified front, we must widely broadcast the importance of our collective work across public and private lines, including the long-term economic, social and moral impact that come from our investments."

Dr. Howard is Vice President of Quality Advancement for Qualistar Colorado.

**Bill Jaeger**
"Ensuring children have access to high-quality early experiences requires a collective commitment to Colorado’s children and to their families. Support for access to high quality child care, preschool and investments in parents as children’s first and best caregivers need to all be part of our policy solutions to giving every child a strong start in life."

Jaeger is Vice President of Early Childhood Initiatives at the Colorado Children’s Campaign.

**Lynn Johnson**
"Make existing service models of early childhood education more effective, efficient and holistic. Enhance the dignity, respect and positive choices of parents and the empowerment of parents to work toward the success of their children as well as their own self-sufficiency. Measure child progress in a manner that informs teaching practice as well as fits seamlessly into the classroom environment and produces results that are also helpful to parents."

Johnson is Executive Director of Jefferson County (Colorado) Human Services.

**Brenda McChesney**
"To effectively address the crisis in early childhood education, policy makers, funders, educators and family-serving agencies need to understand the complex challenges that families in America are facing, and in response develop two-generation approaches that work with both the child and parent/caregiver to build protective factors."

McChesney is Director of Strengthening Families Programs and the Co-Chair of the National Network of Family Support & Strengthening Networks.

**Lydia Prado, PhD**
"The relationship between primary caregivers and infants/young children can be astoundingly protective. Clinical research has identified microsocial interactions and conditions that contribute to nurturing, safe and stable relationships. We need to adopt a strengths-based approach and share what we’ve learned with all caregivers of young children."

Dr. Prado is the Vice President of Child & Family Services at the Mental Health Center of Denver.

**Panel Moderator - Ginger Maloney, PhD**
"I think every new mother should receive a home visit within 48 hours after bringing her baby home from the hospital. Having a home visit in the first few days after delivery would help ensure that every mother-and-child dyad gets off to a good and healthy start."

Dr. Maloney is Early Childhood Consultant and former Dean of MCE and Director of Marsico.
Get Involved!

Spread the word. Tell a friend.

When you leave tonight’s event, share what you’ve learned – the challenges and possible solutions – with one person. Tell a friend, or your neighbor or your City Council representative. Help us start the discussion and build momentum.

Spread the word online. Like The Raising of America on Facebook and share the film’s posts with your friends. Use #RaisingofAmerica to join the national dialogue about the series. Use #COKids to talk about issues impacting Colorado’s children.

Host a Screening

Early childhood education issues impact all of us – parents, neighbors, educators and businesses. Invite your friends and professional networks to a special screening of The Raising of America. Use the film as a catalyst for group discussion, and ask your peers “How do these issues impact us and what solutions are we uniquely positioned to offer?”

Rocky Mountain PBS and Civic Canopy also have online toolkits to help you plan your screening. Check out these resources online:

- http://raisingofamerica.org/plan-screening
- http://www.rmpbs.org/earlylearning/

Call Your Local Child Care Resource & Referral Office

Child Care Resource & Referral agencies across Colorado help to ensure families have access to quality child care and they provide data to stakeholders on child care availability and affordability. You can contact your local CCR&R office and ask them to partner in hosting a screening of Are We Crazy About Our Kids?, another episode in The Raising of America series. Local CCR&Rs also connect child care programs to resources to improve their quality.

Find CCR&R offices at http://www.qualistar.org/ccrr.html

Contact Your Legislator

Tell elected officials that you care about early childhood education and you want them to make these issues a priority. Visit http://www.colorado.gov/esri/webmaps/my-hood.html to search for your legislator.

Visit the Take Action section of the Colorado Children’s Campaign (coloradokids.org) and learn more about contacting your legislator.