

Frequently Asked Questions



Learn & Grow
Alaska's Commitment to Quality Early Care & Learning

Where do I go to find out more information about Learn & Grow?

Information about Learn & Grow can be found at <http://www.aklearnandgrow.org>. A program can also email Learn & Grow at info@aklearnandgrow.org. Or you can call (907)265-3100 (800)_____ and ask to speak to a Learn & Grow representative.

Is my program required to participate in Learn & Grow?

Learn & Grow is a voluntary system and your program is not required to participate. Early care & learning programs are encouraged to enroll and access the supports and resources available to help their program stay actively engaged in continuous quality improvement.

What types of programs are eligible to apply and participate in Learn & Grow?

Early care and learning programs with a State of Alaska Child Care biennial licensed or MOA Child Care biennial license are eligible to apply and participate in Learn & Grow.

Do I need to apply to Learn & Grow or am I automatically enrolled because I have a biennial license?

Early care and learning programs with a biennial licensed are NOT automatically enrolled in Learn & Grow.

If my ECL program does not have a biennial licensed am I eligible to apply?

Having a biennial child care license is required to enroll in Learn & Grow; however, early care and learning programs administrators who do not have a biennial license are welcome to complete the Learn & Grow Level 1 Training and learn more about Learn & Grow prior to obtaining a biennial license.

My program is closed for the summer. Can we still participate?

Yes, early care and learning programs that operate a part-year program are eligible to participate in Learn & Grow as long as they have a biennial child care license.

I am the director of an ECL program with multiple sites. Can I enter one application for all sites?

If an early care and learning center has multiple sites, each site must enroll to participate and will be considered as individual Learn & Grow participating programs.

How are Head Start, Pre-K, school-age, and NAEYC Accredited programs included in Learn & Grow?

At this point in time all State of Alaska and MOA licensed Early care and learning programs are eligible to apply. The Quality Standards that apply to licensed centers will be used to determine an early care and learning programs recognition level. Phase II of Learn & Grow will include specific Quality Standards applicable to each of these programs.

How do I sign up for Learn & Grow?

First step is to sign up for the Learn & Grow Level 1 Training. Go to <https://threadalaska.org/index.cfm/calendar>



Is there a cost to sign up for Learn & Grow?

No, there is no cost to sign up for Learn & Grow.

Does this Learn & Grow Level 1 Training count for licensing training?

Yes, the Learn & Grow Level 1 Training is a SEED approved training that meets SEED Training Approval system requirements.

What happens if my ECL program changes locations? What will happen to my Learn & Grow Recognition Level?

If an early care and learning program has received a Level 1 or Level 2 Learn & Grow Recognition Level and moves location their Learn & Grow Recognition Level is still valid at the new licensed location of their program.

What supports and resources are available to ECL programs who participate in Learn & Grow?

There are three types of supports available to an early care and learning program: technical assistance, quality recognition awards (financial), and marketing/communication materials. Additionally, there are professional development funds available to individuals pursuing training and education. Professional development funds are available to any early care and learning professional who is actively registered in the SEED Registry and not dependent on whether their place of employment is enrolled in Learn & Grow. Go to www.seedalaska.org for additional information about available professional development funding.

What are Quality Standard areas?

There are four Learn & Grow quality standard areas. They build on the quality foundation of licensing standards. The quality standard areas are: Administration and Leadership; Staff Qualifications & Professional Development; Relationships and Learning Environment; and Family Engagement.

There are specific requirements related to quality in each standard area. As an early care and learning program moves through the five (5) levels of Learn & Grow, the early care and learning program will work toward and achieve progressive quality requirements in these four quality standard areas.

What are the Learn & Grow Levels of Quality and what do they mean?

Learn & Grow is a block system composed of five (5) levels of quality. In order to receive recognition of a level, an early care and learning program must achieve all required quality standards of that level. To advance to the next level, an early care and learning program must also complete all the requirements of any preceding level.

Starting in July 2016 Level 1 and Level 2 will be available for early care and learning programs to access and work toward achieving. As funding is made available, early care and learning programs will be able to access Level 3, 4, and 5 supports and resources.

What supports are available at Level 1?

There are marketing and communication materials as well as technical assistance available from **thread** to support your program achieving Level 1 quality standards. Technical assistance is first come, first served.



Is there a time limit to achieving Level 1 recognition?

No, there is not a time limit on when your program achieves Level 1. However, resources and supports will be given to early care and learning programs who are actively pursuing a Level 1 recognition level.

Can my program skip Level 1 and go straight to Level 2?

No, early care and learning programs must first achieve Level 1 requirements before they can enroll in Level 2.

What supports are available for Level 2?

There are three types of supports available for Level 2: technical assistance; a quality recognition award (financial) once your program has received a Level 2 recognition level; and marketing and communication materials. Technical assistance and quality recognition awards are first come, first served.

How long will it take to complete Level 2?

Each early care and learning program is different. Learn & Grow supports are designed to meet the individual needs of each early care and learning program. Early care and learning programs set their own pace and identify what is feasible and achievable for their program to complete. Technical assistance and quality recognition awards are first come, first served.

Are ECL programs who accept Child Care Assistance or the Alaska Child Care Grant (CCG) required to participate in Learn & Grow?

No, early care and learning programs that accept State or Tribal Child Care Assistance or receive funding from the Alaska Child Care Grant (CCG) are not required to participate in Learn & Grow.

Can a program start with Level 2?

No, an early care and learning program must receive a Level 1 recognition status before they can start working on Level 2.

How will my ECL program be notified of a Learn & Grow Recognition Level?

Once an early care and learning program has completed all the required steps of Level 1 and/or Level 2 your program will receive notification of your recognition level via email and a personal contact from the assigned **thread** Professional Development Specialist (PDS). The PDS will have marketing materials, quality recognition awards, and much more to help early care and learning programs celebrate accomplishments.

What if I disagree with my environmental assessment or Learn & Grow recognition level designation?

Learn & Grow has an appeal process that can be found in the Learn & Grow policies and procedures manual.

Will my program's Learn & Grow recognition level be shared publicly?

At this time Learn & Grow will not be publishing ECL programs recognition Levels. If a family calls **thread** for a child care referral the referral report will identify participating Learn & Grow programs but not their Level of Recognition.



How often will my program have to renew its recognition level?

Each year an early care and learning program will have to renew their recognition Level. They will receive a reminder notice 90 days prior to renewal date.

What is the Moving Into Higher Quality Training?

The Moving Into Higher Quality Training is the training associated with Level 2 for Lead Teachers. This training includes: Strengthening Families, Pyramid Foundations, and Environmental Rating Overview and Self-Assessment.

Who qualifies as a lead teacher?

Staff identified by a program as the primary caregiver in each classroom is equivalent to the lead teacher. This may or may not be a program's Child Development Leader (CDL) or Child Care Administrator (CCA).

Will Learn & Grow training need to be repeated with each renewal?

Once an individual completes the required training associated with the Level their program is working on, they have satisfied the training requirement of the specific level.

If I have completed any or all of the Moving Into Higher Quality Trainings in the past do I have to retake them for Learn & Grow?

No. If you have completed any of the Moving Into Higher Quality training in the past, prior to enrolling in Learn & Grow, you do not need to repeat them to meet the Level 2 Quality Standard requirements.

What is SEED?

The Alaska System for Early Education Development, or SEED, is Alaska's early childhood professional development system. Based at **thread**, SEED is a collaborative of: Head Start; the Tribal Childcare Association; State of Alaska Departments of Education and Early Development, Health and Social Services, Labor; **thread**; and other nonprofit agencies in Alaska. SEED integrates and recognizes the needs of a diverse workforce, which includes early care and learning providers, certified teachers, early interventionists, administrators, and others working in related positions that support the development of young children. <http://www.seedalaska.org>

SEED manages the following:

1. SEED Professional Development Registry
2. Alaska Core Knowledge and Competencies
3. Alaska Training Approval System
4. Professional Development Funding

What do SEED and Learn & Grow have to do with each other?

SEED identifies and supports individual professional development standards for individual professionals working in the early care and learning field.

Learn & Grow identifies and supports quality standards for early care and learning programs. Staff Qualifications & Professional Development is one of the four Learn & Grow Quality Standard areas.

Both SEED and Learn & Grow are housed and managed at **thread**, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network. <http://www.threadalaska.org>