Welcome to The Other Washington
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Executive Summary

EWU Early Head Start remains the only program to provide comprehensive infant/toddler services in the Tri-Counties while Rural Resources continues to provide Head Start services to the 3 to 5 year old children.

EWU EHS continues to play an essential role in providing services to low income families with infants and toddlers who live in the poorest and most underserved areas in Washington.

EWU EHS’ 2014 Full Community Assessment verifies that there are increased needs for low-income families with infants and toddlers in the Tri-Counties (Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties).

The three long-term themes of this Community Assessment are:

1) The Tri-County area continues to be the poorest in the State of Washington, suffering from an ongoing lack of jobs that can support families;

2) The area continues to suffer from inadequate and inaccessible services; geographic isolation, and chronic family poverty; and

3) A disproportionate number of Tri-County children live in poverty.

The number of children living in poverty remains high, especially when compared to the rest of Washington. Low income Tri-County families live in communities than have increased risk factors, making delivery of EHS services even more complex that in the past.

Health, nutrition, education and social services for children in general and more specifically, infants and toddlers in the 0-3 years of age population have been seriously impacted by the prolonged economic downturn that started during the 2008 Market Crash.
Beginning in 2001, funding for EHS and Head Start began to be reduced or was flat. The current recession hit in late 2008, causing state and local governments to be stretched to the limit in the last five years. These agencies are now facing even more funding and service cutbacks. Future funding for state services that directly affect low-income children is threatened by the on-going economic situation.

Local non-profit agencies are straining to fill the gaping holes in the low-income safety net.

**What does this mean for the EWU EHS planning process?**

With increasing poverty and decreasing resources, the impacts on children and families in the Tri-Counties include:

1) Increased numbers of families dealing with multiple and serious risk factors;
2) Families have harder decisions to make about how to get the basic necessities of life (food, medicine, transportation, health care) and what they will do without;
3) Increased rates of homelessness and moving between temporary short-stay locations; and
4) Increased rates of families involved with the state’s Child Protective Services and increased numbers of children in foster care.
TRI-COUNTY FAST FACTS

Ferry County

Total population 7,650 (up from 7,551 in 2010)

Largest community – Republic – 1,095 persons

Children 0-4 years old – 359

Live births – 72

Health ranking – 39 out of 39 counties in Washington

Child care – 1 licensed family child care with capacity for 4 infants and 4 toddlers

Living wage calculated for 1 adult and 1 child in Tri-Counties – $36,487

Per capita income – $27,948 compared to Washington State – $46,045

Per capita income ranking in state – 39 out of 39

Median household income - $37,548 compared to Washington State $56,444

Unemployment rate – 9.8% compared to Washington State 6.4.% (as of October, 2013)

Persons below poverty level – 20.8% compared to Washington State 12.5%

Children under 5 in poverty – 31%

One in five households has income less than the federal poverty level

One in four adults has no medical insurance

One in four households experiences food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods
**Stevens County**

Total population 43,800 (up from 43,531 in 2010)

Largest community – Colville – 4,685 persons

Children 0-4 years old – 2,220

Live births – 426

Health ranking – 33 out of 39 counties in Washington

Child care – 37 licensed slots for infants and 56 licensed slots for toddlers

Living wage calculated for 1 adult and 1 child in Tri-Counties – $36,487

Per capita income - $30,086 compared to Washington State – $46,045

Per capita income ranking in state – 37 out of 39

Median household income - $41,643 compared to Washington State $56,444

Unemployment rate – 8.9% compared to Washington State 6.4% (as of October, 2013)

Persons below poverty level – 16% compared to Washington State 12.5%

Children under 5 in poverty – 23%

One in six households has income less than the federal poverty level

One in five adults has no medical insurance

One in nine households experiences food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods

**Pend Oreille County**

Total population – 13,150 (up from 13,001 in 2010)

Largest community – Newport – 2,140 persons

Children 0-4 years old – 632

Live births – 99

Health ranking – 30 out of 39 counties in Washington

Child care – 10 licensed slots for infants and 17 licensed slots for toddlers
Living wage calculated for 1 adult and 1 child in Tri-Counties – $36,487
Per capita income - $32,890 compared to Washington State – $46,045
Per capita income ranking in state – 35 out of 39
Median household income $37,755 - compared to Washington State $56,444
Unemployment rate – 9.2% compared to Washington State 6.4% (as of October, 2013)
Persons below poverty level – 20% compared to Washington State 12.5%
Children under 5 years old in poverty – 30.9%
One in five households has income less than the federal poverty level
One in five adults has no medical insurance.
One in nine households experiences food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods

Ethnicity
Ferry County
White (non-Hispanic) – 76.8%
Native American – on-reservation – 17%
Hispanic – 3%
Two or more race groups – 3.2%

Stevens County
White (non-Hispanic) – 88.2%
Native American – on-reservation- 5.6%
Hispanic – 3%
Two or more race groups – 3.2%

Pend Oreille County
White (non-Hispanic) – 89.5%
Native American – 4%
Hispanic – 3.5%
Two or more race groups – 3%

Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect in Accepted Referrals (per 1,000 children ages birth-17)
Washington State – 33.7
Ferry County – 46.1
Pend Oreille County – 57
Stevens County – 44.6

EWU EHS Families Involved with CPS Last Program Year – 21.68%
EWU EHS Children Who Were Homeless Last Program Year - 17%

Estimated Number of Children- ages 0 to 3 years, with Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSPs) for Disabilities or Developmental Delays in Tri-Counties – 39
Needs of Families with Infants and Toddlers in the Tri-Counties

- Employment – Jobs, higher wages and job training
- Transportation
- Health care, including specialized care for infants and toddlers, pediatric care, dental, obstetrics, and other specialties
- Food security, nutrition, access to food vendors
- Mental health services
- Parenting skills and education
- Affordable and adequate housing and ancillary services, such as weatherization, utility assistance, and emergency housing
- Social services
- Child care

Key Community Resources

- Rural Resources Community Action Program (including Head Start and ECEAP)
- Washington State Department of Child and Family Services (DSHS)
- Washington State Employment Security Department
- Northeast Washington Tri-County Health District
- Local school districts
- Local food banks
- Spokane Community College
- NorthEast Washington Educational Service District (NEWESD) 101
- Local non-profits and local religious organizations
- Northeast Washington Alliance Counseling Services
- Pend Oreille County Counseling Services

These Fast Facts meet the minimum federal requirement that a community assessment contain the following information:

1) The demographic make-up of eligible children and families, including their estimated number, geographic location, and racial ethnic composition;
2) Other child development and child care programs that are serving eligible children;

3) Estimated number of children with disabilities;

4) Data regarding education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of eligible children and families;

5) The education, health, nutrition and social service needs of eligible children and their families as defined by families of Early Head Start eligible children and by institutions in the community that serve young children; and

6) Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families.

Federal Performance Standard 1305.3(c).
Welcome to The Other Washington

Mention the State of Washington to someone from another part of the United States and it is most likely that they will talk about the prosperous Seattle/Puget Sound urban area, home to Microsoft, Starbucks, Amazon, Costco, R.E.I., Boeing and Nordstrom.

In stark contrast, the Tri-Counties (Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties) is The Other Washington, a poor, remote, isolated and largely-ignored region tucked away in the far northeast corner of the state. The Tri-Counties have many interconnected community risk factors that disproportionately impact low-income families. [See Risk and Protection Profiles for Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties, 2013, Research and Data Analysis Division, 2013, Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington.]

Discussing the Tri-Counties as The Other Washington was inspired by The Other America by Michael Harrington. Published in 1962 and still widely referenced, The Other America focused national attention on the invisible poor in the

What does this mean for families?

Families live in the poorest counties in the State of Washington.

A disproportionate number of Tri-County children live in poverty, especially when compared to the rest of Washington.

The area continues to suffer from inadequate and inaccessible services, geographic isolation, chronic lack of jobs and many other community risk factors.

Health, nutrition, and social services for the 0-3 years of age population have been seriously impacted by the prolonged economic downturn and the federal sequestration that started in October, 2013 and is likely to continue in January, 2014.
United States. It has been credited with providing public awareness and support for the War on Poverty programs, including Head Start, that were created in the mid to late 1960s.

Harrington was writing over 50 years ago; however, his descriptions of rural poverty are still accurate today for Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties. Visitors to the Tri-Counties comment how the chronic poverty, lack of services and geographic isolation reminds them of Appalachia or rural Alaska.

*The Other Washington* is a world far removed from the affluence of the urban Puget Sound area of Washington. Ferry County ranks 39th out of 39 counties in the Washington for per capita income while Stevens County ranks 37th and Pend Oreille ranks 35th.

Let’s look at some quick comparisons between *The Other Washington* and the prosperous Puget Sound area:

- Per capita income in the Tri-Counties – $30,308
- Per capita income in King County – $60,090

- Median household income in the Tri-Counties – $38,982
- Median household income in King County – $70,567

- Living wage calculated for 1 adult and 1 child in Tri-Counties – $36,487
- Living wage calculated for 1 adult and 1 child in Seattle – $42,711

- Children (0-18 years) living in poverty in
  - Ferry County 29%
  - Stevens County – 29%
  - Pend Oreille County – 33%
  - King County – 15%
- [Note: the federal poverty guidelines for 1 adult and 1 child is $15,510]

- Unemployment rate in the Tri-Counties – 9.3%
- Unemployment rate in King County – 5.4%

- Teen birth rate
  - Ferry County 34 per 1000
  - Stevens County – 38 per 1000
  - Pend Oreille County – 48 per 1000
  - King County – 20 per 1000
Ratio of primary care physicians
1 per 2,519 in Ferry County
1 per 1,673 in Stevens County
1 per 2,162 in Pend Oreille County
1 per 888 in King County

The Tri-Counties are designated as a Medically Underserved Area. They are also designated as Primary Care, Dental Care and Mental Health Care Professional Shortage Areas.

The gap between the Tri-Counties and the rest of the State of Washington has been widening over the past several decades as the three counties have lost much of their economic base with the collapse of the local mining and timber industries.

The 2008 Market Crash and the 2013 Federal Sequester were one-two economic punches to the Tri-Counties, resulting in substantial cuts in services for low income families. Local government and non-profit agencies have few prospects of getting back to pre-2008 funding levels. Among the hardest hit have been services to families with children.

By most socio-economic measures, the Tri-Counties are The Other Washington that will continue to lag far behind the rest of Washington State for the foreseeable future. [See generally, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017, Tri-County Economic Development District; County Profiles, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.]

EWU EHS’ 2014 Community Assessment seeks to better understand what it is like for families with infants and toddlers living in The Other Washington of Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties. By including the experiences of these all-too-often “invisible” families, EWU EHS can continue to play an essential role in providing services to low income families who live in the poorest and most underserved area in Washington.
Families living in *The Other Washington* come in a wide range of shapes and sizes.

Last program year, approximately two thirds of the enrolled families had two adults in the household. About 75% of the enrolled families have 1 child in EWU EHS with 23% of the families having 2 or more children enrolled last program year.

EWU EHS families include:

- 1 biological parent raising 1 or more child alone
- 1 biological parent with 1 or more child with a non-biological parent in the household
- 2 biological parents raising 1 or more child
- Biological relatives (grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles) raising 1 or more child
- Foster parents (relatives or non-relatives) raising 1 or more child
- Non-Native American foster parents raising Native American children
- Legal guardians raising children
- Pregnant women, living alone or with a partner
- Teen parents as young as 15 years old
- Biological parents in their twenties, thirties and forties
- Foster parents in their thirties all the way up into their eighties (80s!)

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

EWU Early Head Start can best design and deliver its services if the program has a strong factual understanding of the region and widely varied families it serves.

A cookie cutter approach is not feasible. What works in Seattle, Spokane, Yakima, or the Tri-Cities will not work in *The Other Washington* of the Tri-Counties.

The Tri-Counties are unique and as such, require Early Head Start services be tailored to the realities of Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille Counties that make up *The Other Washington*. 
What does this mean for families?

EWU EHS parents have contributed to the community assessment process.

EWU EHS Policy Council, made up of parents and community representatives, has been actively involved in this process.

The information and insights that have been provided by parents and the Policy Council have enriched EWU EHS’ understanding of what it is like to raise infants and toddlers in the Tri-Counties.

EWU Early Head Start’s Community Assessment Process

Federal Performance Standards 1305.3 (c) require Early Head Start programs to conduct a full Community Assessment every three years with updates required in the intervening years. EWU EHS conducted its last full Community Assessment in 2011.

As part of its 2014 Full Community Assessment, EWU EHS gathered information and input between September and December from a wide range of sources, including the enrolled parents, EWU EHS Policy Council, Parent Child Educators and other program staff.

In order to paint a picture of what it is really like to live in the Tri-Counties with infants and toddlers, this community assessment reflects the experiences and events that were shared by enrolled parents in a variety of settings, some of which were informal and impromptu discussions in homes, at Play and Learns and at Policy Council meetings. Other descriptions of real life come from EWU EHS staff who work with these parents each day.

EWU EHS would like to thank everyone, especially the parents, who participated in this year’s community
assessment. Their candor, insights and experiences helped EWU EHS better understand the communities that this program has the privilege to serve.

EWU EHS’ 2014 Community Assessment goes far beyond the minimum requirements. We were particularly interested in two questions:

**What is it like for families with infants and toddlers to live in the Tri-Counties?**

AND

**What does it mean for EWU Early Head Start as it plans its future services?**

The following were useful information resources in preparing this Community Assessment:

*EWU EHS 2013 Program Information Report.*

*EWU EHS 2013 Parent Input Questionnaire Summary.*


*Risk and Protection Profiles for Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties, 2013, Research and Data Analysis Division, 2013, Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington.*

*Chronic Disease Profiles for Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties, Department of Health, State of Washington.*
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

The 2014 Community Assessment incorporates real life experiences of families who live in Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties.

By blending real life experiences with data from reliable sources, EWU EHS is better able to use its 2014 Community Assessment to prepare for the next 3 to 5 years.
Community Assessment – How It Is Used

EWU Early Head Start takes the Community Assessment process seriously and sees it as much more than a federally mandated formality.

The program’s Community Assessment process is the starting point for EWU EHS’ short and long term planning process. EWU EHS uses its Community Assessment to:

1) Help determine the program’s philosophy, and long-range and short-range objectives;
2) Determine the type of component services that are most needed and the program options that will be implemented;
3) Determine the recruitment area;
4) Determine appropriate locations for centers and the areas to be served by home-based programs; and
5) Set criteria that define the types of children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection.

[Performance Standard 1305.3 (d)]

What does this mean for EWU Early Head Start?

The 2014 Community Assessment provides EWU EHS with the information needed to make good decisions about how to best provide services throughout the Tri-Counties that are:

- Consistent
- Fairly distributed
- Responsive to the needs of families
- Promoting school readiness

EWU EHS can also use this Community Assessment for orientation of new staff, Policy Council and Governing Board, for other professional development, training and community outreach.

Future EWU EHS services will be shaped to fit the existing and future conditions in the Tri-Counties.

EWU EHS will continue to respond to the real needs of families in each part of the Tri-Counties.
The Lay of the Land

The geography in the 6,300 square miles of the Tri-Counties is some of the most rugged in the United States. Much of it is designated as frontier.

As shown in the map below, the region is divided by mountain ranges that run north and south. Between the mountains are small, steep valleys in which the majority of people live.

Scenic and mountainous national forest land and tribal reservation lands take up most of the region’s non-private

What does this mean for families?

The Tri-Counties has a rugged and beautiful environment in which families choose to live.

Families live in a physical environment that limits regional economic development and the counties’ tax base.

The geography creates major challenges for transportation.

Geographic isolation causes social isolation and limits access to basic services.
lands. These public lands make up about 75% of the Tri-Counties and are a major factor in where people can live in the region, especially in Ferry County where less than 18% of the land is privately owned. Public ownership of the federal land removes it “from potential revenue generation, from property taxes, sales taxes and other sources of income. Although a system of Payment in Lieu of Taxes was established to help offset losses in property taxes, within the region there is a general philosophy of no net loss of additional lands from the private sector to the public sector.” Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017, Tri-County Economic Development District.

The Tri-Counties have four weather seasons. The region’s climate is greatly influenced by its mountain ranges and the Pacific Ocean 200 miles to the west. Winters are snowy and cold, limiting safe travel throughout the region, especially in the higher elevations. Summers are dry and warm. The food growing season is short.

The region’s mountains provide habitat for cougars, deer, elk, moose, bears (including small pockets of grizzlies) and wolf packs. Deer and moose are serious highway hazards and are the cause of many accidents and injuries each year. Cougars can pose a serious risk to humans, especially to infants, toddlers and young children.

In the past, the region’s mountains supported prosperous mining and lumber activities. Those extraction industries have been declining over the past several decades. Now, the scenic mountains provide seasonal, low-paying tourism and recreation industry jobs.

The Columbia River separates Ferry and Stevens County, with crossings limited to only two bridges (at Northport and Kettle Falls) and two ferries (at Gifford and south of
The river has been adversely impacted by over one hundred years of mining and smelting activities.

Significant environmental damage to the Columbia River is a legacy from past lead smelting activities in Northport and in Trail, B.C., located a few miles north of the Canadian border. Medical research continues into the linkage between this century-long pollution and the health effects on residents along the Columbia River, especially in Northport where residents have significantly elevated rates of Crohn’s Disease and other gastrointestinal illnesses.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

The region’s geography creates major service access challenges for families who often have limited ability to get from their homes to local communities.

The region’s geography creates service delivery challenges for EWU EHS.

The EWU EHS service delivery model needs to bring services to families, whenever possible.
What does this mean for families?

Families live in small communities that are geographically isolated from each other.

The widely dispersed population makes it harder for families to join together for regional and state-wide advocacy.

Geographic isolation promotes social isolation and a lack of regional identity.

The Tri-Counties low population lessens its political clout at the state level.

Where Do People Live?

Most of the Tri-Counties’ population lives in Stevens County (44,300) with 13,150 and 7,650 living in Pend Oreille and Ferry counties, respectively. Much of the population lives near U.S. 395 that serves as the main transportation corridor for Stevens County and to a lesser extent, Ferry County. Highway 2 serves a similar function in Pend Oreille County.

There are no communities in the Tri-Counties with a
population of over 5,000. About 60% of the population lives outside of incorporated towns.

Most of the private land on which people can live is in valleys that run north and south between the region’s mountain ranges. These valleys are easy to find on the map on the previous page by following the north-south roads. In Ferry County, a valley runs from Republic north to the Canadian border at Danville. In Stevens County, a broad valley starts in Chewelah and runs past Colville to Kettle Falls. Pend Oreille County has a narrower valley running from Newport to Ione.

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<td>Republic</td>
<td>954</td>
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<td>Pend Oreille</td>
<td>11,732</td>
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<tr>
<td>Springdale</td>
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People live in a wide range of housing that includes trailers, mobile homes, yurts, tents, single family homes and apartments in towns, and rustic homesteads. The demand for subsidized housing far exceeds availability.

Running water, electricity and paved access often are lacking, especially outside of the towns. Wood is frequently used as the main heating during the cold winters.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

Home visit services need to be distributed across an expansive geographic area.

EWU EHS must be committed to respect families’ choices of where they live by bringing services to them in their own homes and communities.

Services need to reflect the unique qualities and identities of each community.
Many Communities With Their Own Identities.

Each of the Tri-County communities is unique and has its own identity. It is a common mistake for outsiders to assume otherwise.

Raising a child in Republic is a very different experience than raising one in Newport. The same can be said of all of the communities in the Tri-counties.

Let’s look at the main communities:

Colville (pop. 4,685) – the county seat of Stevens County and the regional hub for federal, state agencies and non-profit programs in the Tri-Counties. Colville is the primary medical, hospital, retail and social service center in the three counties. Colville’s non-profit groups that serve low-income families have been hard hit by the economic downturn. Full-time jobs outside of the health and government sectors are scarce. The few local manufacturing and milling businesses are vulnerable to national and global economic cycles, resulting in regular worker layoffs. While Colville has the best selection of food stores (Super Wal-Mart, Safeway, Super One supermarkets) in the Tri-Counties, EWU EHS
families often say that food is more expensive in Colville and they express concerns about the food’s quality. People travel from Ferry County, north and central Stevens County and even from north Pend Oreille County to shop and access services in Colville. Housing includes single family homes, apartments and mobile home parks; however, subsidized housing is scarce with long waiting lists.

**Republic (pop. 1,095)** – the county seat of Ferry County and a former gold rush town that has a small public hospital and branch offices of some state and local agencies. Republic residents have a large locally-owned market for food and other household needs. Otherwise, residents must travel to Colville for services and shopping. Republic has limited rental housing for families.

**Newport (pop. 2,140)** – the county seat of Pend Oreille County and located on the Idaho state line. Drive over the railroad tracks in Newport and you find yourself in Old Town, Idaho. Moving from an apartment in Newport to a rental house in Old Town can mean loss of access to a range of services. Over 40% of its working residents commute to jobs outside of Pend Oreille County, mainly to Spokane. Newport has one supermarket (Safeway) and limited retail stores. Residents frequently travel south to Spokane or east to Priest River and Sandpoint, Idaho for their shopping needs. Housing ranges from single family housing in the town’s residential and business core to subsidized apartments located on the outskirts of Newport. There are no sidewalks connecting these subsidized apartments with downtown Newport or with local branch state agency offices. Newport has a small hospital and medical community. There are no dentists
in Newport who accept patients with Medicaid insurance so most families in the EHS population must travel to Spokane for even routine, preventive dental services.

**Northport (pop. 290)** – calls itself *The Town That Will Not Give Up*. Its population has shrunk from around 2,500 people at its height as a mining and refining town. Guide books list Northport as a ghost town even though it is has a population of almost 300 persons. The Northport School (K-12) serves as the hub of community activities. Northport has a small market with a limited food selection. Residents must travel over 40 miles to Colville to access food, services and retail shopping. The housing stock is old and deteriorating. Jobs are few and far between.

**Onion Creek (unincorporated)** – located on a side road off of U.S. 395 north of Colville. The Onion Creek Store and the Onion Creek School (Pre-K through 8) are the focal points of this dispersed community. Residents live on large, forested parcels with unpaved access roads. Wood is often a primary heat source. Multi-generational families mix with more recently located residents, several of whom moved from the West Coast’s I-5 Corridor. Onion Creek residents value its remoteness, isolation, and wooded beauty and like to live off the grid and off the land. These residents travel to Colville for shopping and access to services. But weather and the cost of driving 40 miles round trip to Colville can be serious limitations for Onion Creek families.

**Kettle Falls (pop. 1,595)** – close to Colville where many Kettle Falls residents work, shop and access services. Kettle Falls has a small downtown with a medical clinic and a grocery that
focuses on natural foods. Older residential stock surrounds the downtown. The town has some rental apartments and single family houses that show signs of deferred maintenance.

**Chewelah (pop. 2,615)** – a compact town located on U.S. 395 in a large agricultural valley on the way north to Colville. For the past decade, Chewelah has been promoted nationally as a retirement location and has seen an influx of seniors who live there seasonally or even year-round. A common local perception is that increasing senior population is not supportive of local schools and was a major reason for the failure of a recent school bond levy ballot measure. Chewelah has a supermarket, small hospital and some minor retail stores. Residents need to travel north to Colville or south to Spokane for most services, food and other shopping. Rental housing includes apartments and single family residences. EWU EHS parents indicate that illegal drug use is on the rise as is robbery and burglary. One incident this fall lends credence to that belief. The church in which EWU EHS holds its local socialization activities (called Play and Learns) was burglarized. The following day, an EWU EHS Parent Child Educator (PCE) arrived at the church to prepare for that morning’s Play and Learn. Entering the church, the PCE walked into an active crime scene investigation that had to be suspended while the police officers left the church to respond to a forced entry at the local pharmacy.

**Springdale (pop. 283) Loon Lake (unincorporated) and Valley (unincorporated)** – small Stevens County communities that are more closely oriented toward the Spokane metro area 35 miles to the south than to Colville. Residents tend to live on larger parcels in a range of housing, including single family homes, mobile homes and trailers. Some residents are seasonal occupants of second-home and recreational properties near local lakes. Others have lived in the area for
many decades, valuing the local sense of community, the solitude and back to the land lifestyle. There are very few services and shopping locations.

_Ione, Metaline and Metaline Falls (combined population of 860)_ – a cluster of small towns in far north Pend Oreille County that is roughly equidistance to Colville to the west (over Tiger Pass) and Newport to the south. The Selkirk School District is the focus of these communities’ activities. There are minimal food and retail shopping in these three towns. Employment has been scarce after local mines and processing facilities were shut down several years ago.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

Home visit services need to be distributed across a wide geographic area.

EWU EHS services need to recognize and respect the unique qualities and identities of each community.

All EWU EHS staff need to have the attitudes, skills and knowledge to provide high quality services in widely varying communities.

EWU EHS’ has benefitted from hiring staff who are familiar with the local communities, many of whom are long-time residents of the Tri-Counties.
Getting Around

The area’s geography creates significant transportation challenges, such as the distances to essential services and dangerous road conditions. All roads are two lane and undivided except for a few miles of passing lanes along U.S. 395.

Costs of gas, tires, insurance and car maintenance adversely impact families, especially low income households. Even the process of getting a driver’s license is time consuming and expensive for a low income family.

In Stevens County, 5% of the households have no vehicle while 21.5% have access to 1 vehicle. The figures are even higher for Pend Oreille County where 5.3% of the households have no vehicle and 23.4% have access to 1 vehicle. Pick-up trucks and SUVs are popular because they are rugged enough for the Tri-Counties’ road conditions and are well-suited for a rural lifestyle. At the same time, they are expensive to operate and maintain.

A driver along U.S. 395 will notice several decorated crosses by the side of the highway marking the location of traffic fatalities. At least two of these deadly accidents involved members of families enrolled in EWU EHS. The
wreckage was viewed by EWU EHS staff driving by the accident scene.

Driving in the Tri-counties can take a long time! For example,

Colville to Spokane – 70 miles – 90 minutes
Republic to Colville – 52 miles – 75 minutes
Northport to Colville – 43 miles – 45 minutes
Newport to Spokane – 47 miles – 1 hour
Ione to Spokane – 97 miles – 2 hours
Ione to Colville – 40 miles – 1 hour
Ione to Newport – 50 miles – 1 hour
Chewelah to Colville – 23 miles – 35 minutes
Springdale to Colville – 40 miles – 1 hour
Springdale to Spokane – 38 miles – 1 hour

These are one way travel times in good road conditions and weather. Snow and ice can make travel next to impossible!

Dangerous road conditions are especially present in between Republic and Colville where drivers go over Sherman Pass, which at 5,575 feet is the highest year-round pass in Washington. (Compare to Snoqualmie Pass at 3,022 feet elevation.) Fast-driving logging trucks are common on this winding 2 lane road.

Also very dangerous driving is present on U.S. 395 between Chewelah and north Spokane where a micro-climate can cause heavy snow, rain and icy roads. It is common to see vehicles going off the road during winter and to witness accidents along this section of road. Further adding to the danger is the increasing commuter traffic that travels between Spokane in the south
and Deer Park and south Stevens County in the north. Rush hour northbound traffic starts around 4 pm and creates a constant stream of high speed vehicles leaving the Spokane metro area.

Wildlife also pose a travel hazard, with deer and moose regularly involved in roadway contact with vehicles throughout the region, and serious injuries often resulting.

Difficulty getting around is not limited to driving. There are not many sidewalks in the Tri-Counties and those that do exist are found in a few blocks within downtown areas. That simple fact means that it is difficult for parents with infants and toddlers to get around on foot, especially in the winter.

Imagine walking along a busy street or highway with an infant and a toddler, possibly carrying your children or maybe using a stroller. No sidewalk, a sloped road shoulder, and traffic between 25 and 40 miles an hour. Now picture winter conditions, such as 6 inches of compacted snow and ice or even a 2 or 3 foot high berm of snow. That is the reality even in the center of most of the communities in the Tri-Counties. It is no wonder that attendance at EWU EHS’ Play and Learn activities drops in the winter months.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

EWU EHS employees drive over 120,000 miles each year to provide services to families in their homes and communities.

EWU EHS has a responsibility to make sure that its staff are safe while traveling (driving and on foot) in potentially hazardous conditions. Staff need to have the necessary training, equipment and supervision to stay safe on the job.

EWU EHS needs to be flexible in the scheduling of activities to minimize hazardous travel for both parents and staff. This flexibility can include developing modified service plans, creating alternatives to Play and Learns in winter, writing personal safety plans and adjusting program meeting schedules in response to seasonal hazards.
Who Lives in the Tri-Counties and Why?

So far, we have seen many of the challenges facing the families living in The Other Washington.

But now is a good place to ask three questions that are often asked of EWU EHS by people unfamiliar with the Tri-Counties.

Who lives in the Tri-Counties?

Why do people move to this region?

And more importantly, why do they stay? [Or as a federal review team member asked a EWU EHS Policy Council member several years ago, “Why don’t you just move?”]

There is not a single answer to these questions. But a common thread runs parents’ responses. Many, if not most people, live in the Tri-Counties by choice. In other words, they want to live in Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties.

Residents often say that they like the unique lifestyle and physical setting found in Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties. It is a rugged environment, not for the faint of heart, to be sure, but one that provides the setting for a lifestyle that is attractive to many. Retirees continue to
relocate to the Tri-Counties and their influx is reshaping the local economy.

Even with the hardships (lack of jobs, lack of services, isolation), many, if not most, Tri-County residents want to live here and they want to raise their children here because of the:

- Quiet, safe, and rural lifestyle
- Sense of community and caring among neighbors
- Scenic beauty and recreational opportunities in four seasons
- Sharp contrast in lifestyle between the Tri-Counties and urban areas (often on the I-5 Corridor from Seattle to San Diego)
- Family and friends, many of whom have lived locally for several generations

The eclectic mix of Tri-County residents includes families whose relatives have lived in the region for over 100 years, retirees looking for low cost of living, urban escapees, back-to-the-landers who want to live close to Mother Earth, and small pockets of anti-government sympathizers.

EWU EHS families show a diverse range from teen parents (including teen fathers) all the way up to great-grandparents raising their infant and toddler grandchildren. Some of the parents have lived in California, the Midwest, the East Coast and the Puget Sound area. Others were born and raised in the Tri-Counties as were their parents, their grandparents and great grandparents.

The Tri-Counties have a very low ethnic population with the area being over 88% Caucasian. The next largest ethnic group is Native Americans living on the Colville, Spokane and Kalispel Indian Reservations. Hispanics make up 3% of Ferry County, 3.5% of Pend Oreille and 3% of Stevens counties (as compared to 10.1% for Washington State).

The infant and toddler population for Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens counties is projected to slowly but steadily increase over the next ten years.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

Demand for EWU EHS services will increase because of the projected increase in the infant/toddler population, the ongoing chronic poverty and the lack of services for families with young children into the foreseeable future.

EWU EHS needs to maintain its capacity to provide high quality services to an increasing broad range of families, including those who have relocated from very different urban areas.

EWU EHS plays a critical role in providing the support needed by families living in the Tri-Counties.

* These long term projections are on track with actual population in Ferry County, Stevens County, and Pend Oreille County

The Regional Economy Continues Its Shift From Extraction Industries

Northeast Washington remains The Other Washington, where incomes continue to be among the lowest in the state.

Unemployment rates in the Tri-Counties remain among the highest in the State of Washington. As of October, 2013, unemployment state-wide was at 6.4%. In contrast, unemployment is 9.8% in Ferry County, 8.9% in Stevens County, and 9.2% in Pend Oreille County.

“Mining and lumber activities on the Tri-Counties federal forest land were once the primary source of wealth and job creation in the Tri-Counties. Those extraction industries have been in decline for several decades, severely impacting the local economy. “The region has transitioned to an economic base led by the services industry sector.”


This service sector includes mostly low paying entry level jobs in:

1) An expanding health care industry serving an influx of retirees,

2) travel and tourism and

What does this mean for families?

Families will continue to live in an economically disadvantaged region that is vulnerable to national and global trends.

The Tri-Counties will continue to have high unemployment relative to the rest of Washington.
3) local retail.

“The region’s natural beauty and outdoor recreational resources and lower costing real estate increasingly attract elderly retired persons as visitors and as in-migrants…. Travel and tourism industry in the region employs close to 1,600 people directly or indirectly. This is approximately 16 percent of the total private sector employment, making travel and tourism more of a significant component of the private industry sectors in the region.” *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017*, Tri-County Economic Development District.

Government workers make up 26% of total employment and about 40% of total personal income. *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017*, Tri-County Economic Development District. “It is likely that some government employment will decline as budget reductions are made. Any reductions will create noticeable employment headwinds…” *County Profiles*, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.

The decades-long transition away from the extraction industries has left a big economic hole that will not be filled in the foreseeable future. The 2008 Market Crash made matters even worse. The Tri-Counties’ economic recovery “has been long, slow and painful. Overall growth over the last several years has been anemic, with small pockets of growth, but nowhere near the amount needed to replace the total employment at the peak of the business cycle.” *County Profiles*, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.

There are inherent limitations on infrastructure that is necessary to support economic growth in the Tri-Counties. Transportation is an obvious challenge as was discussed above. So too is the lack of reliable communication technology infrastructure, including high speed Internet and even telephone service. Cell phone reception is widely variable throughout the Tri-Counties.
In many locations, Internet access is sporadic at best. Opportunities for new technology job training and for higher education are limited in the Tri-Counties.

This lack of infrastructure not only constrains economic growth and job creation, it also affects EWU EHS families in their daily lives. Even if parents are able to get community college courses in Colville or Newport, there is no 4 year college program for them to transfer to unless they move out of the area or they use distance learning, which is expensive and is reliant on consistent Internet.

Further, the Tri-Counties’ infrastructure barriers create challenges for routine EWU EHS service delivery, ranging from staff being able to effectively communicate with families as well with other program staff to how to obtain either a B.A. or an advanced degree. While it can be done, it is hard.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

Into the foreseeable future, EWU EHS can expect to have more income eligible families than it can enroll.

EWU EHS is an employer of choice that attracts high quality applicants because of the salary, benefits and relative job security.

Families will continue to need EWU EHS to provide referrals and support to obtain services from other agencies while the parents are unemployed.

EWU EHS will continue to play an important role helping families develop skills needed to improve their chances of finding work.
How Can I Support My Family?

The persistent lack of jobs in the Tri-Counties was by far the most consistent single topic during EWU EHS’ community assessment activities over the past 10 years.

EWU EHS has consistently heard the same messages from enrolled parents. “We want jobs!” “I want to support my family.” “I am willing to work, but there is nothing out there that pays for my drive into town.” “I picked up some part time work, but I want a full time job.”

Despite their desire to work, parents have trouble finding full time, year around jobs, let alone employment at a living wage which is $36,487 for 1 adult and 1 child in the Tri-Counties. County Living Wage Calculator, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

It is very difficult for families to get by on public assistance. A TANF grant for a household of 3 without any income is $487 per month. The highest state food stamp benefit amount is $526 with the average of such a benefit being $245. Even with an additional WIC monthly benefit being about $50 and possible subsidized housing, an unemployed family will come nowhere near to having enough money to pay for the most basic of expenses (rent, food, diapers, transportation, utilities), let alone what often are

What does this mean for families?

Full time employment is a scarce commodity, especially for young parents.

Part-time and seasonal work is common and employment with benefits is rare.

Piecing together work, including casual labor, is one common strategy.

Parents are seeking training and education in the health/medical industry.

Parents get creative by doubling or tripling up in housing, often with extended family.

Local prospects for increased future employment are iffy and may be a long time in coming.

Families are maxing out unemployment and falling of the public benefits roles, but not because they have jobs.
viewed as luxuries (car insurance, medicine, new tires, clothes, nutritious food).

One in 6 Americans receives food stamps through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.


His core diet consisted of peanuts, peanut butter, eggs, and legumes (split peas and lentils). He rarely ate meats or fish.

He added healthy carbohydrates such as oatmeal, whole-wheat pasta, brown rice, baked potatoes and sweet potatoes and home-made whole wheat bread.

He could not buy fresh fruit or vegetables. Instead, he purchased frozen peas and corn for about $1.30 a pound. Milk was limited to 1 cup a day. He would occasionally binge on popcorn, marshmallows and Smores pizzas.

The reporter noted that “this was only a test, not the harsh realities of poverty.” He also acknowledged that his ability to bargain shop at large supermarkets was “essential to driving down costs.”

What was observed 3 years ago is even truer today. “For young people who want to stay here and raise families, the number one barrier is jobs,” stated John Smith of the Colville Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee. [Colville Statesman Examiner, January 12, 2011].

Imagine that you are a parent looking for work in Ferry County. You go into the local Washington State Work Source office to check out the job listings. You see 10 jobs posted for the period October 18 to December 2, 2013.
These job postings include 3 part-time jobs (on-call hospital housekeeper, on-call clerical and experienced wait staff), 4 medical positions (travelling physical therapist, registered nurses and a certified medical assistant) and 3 more for grill cook, welder training leader and chip truck drivers.

Now imagine that you live in Newport instead of Republic and you go to Work Source looking for a job. You see 15 listings, 3 of which are full time (uniformed security officer, Class A truck driver and a Radio Shack computer technician). The remaining 10 listings are for part-time jobs at the local Safeway, McDonald’s, school bus company, and small security company and a cook/housekeeper position.

More jobs are listed at the Colville Work Source office, but most require some form of specialized skill and training. Many of the job listings are connected with the growing health care industry in Colville.

Other studies have keyed in on employment as an essential need in the Tri-Counties. 


The region has been buffeted by global economic downturns that have resulted in an overall reduction of government and private sector jobs. The Tri-Counties are especially vulnerable to outside economic factors. The closure of a zinc mine in north Pend Oreille County resulted in 165 jobs being lost in 2009. The closure was caused by a downturn in the automobile industry which uses refined zinc. The collapse of the U.S. housing market had a devastating effect on the Tri-County timber industry. Logging operations were shut down and mills were closed.
“Stevens County tends to have one of the highest unemployment rates as well as a lower labor force participation in the state.” Stevens County Profile, August 2013, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.

“The economy of Ferry County has remained static with little change over time. The lack of economic growth is reflected in slow population growth, an older than average population, higher than average government employment and little or negative real employment growth.” Ferry County Profile, August 2013, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.

“The employment in Pend Oreille County has been affected by the most recent recession, beginning in 2008. So far, the recovery has been long, slow and painful.” Pend Oreille County Profile, August 2013, Employment Security Department, State of Washington.

The long-term impact of the chronically poor economy on the Tri-Counties as whole, and on families with young children in particular, cannot be overstated.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

EWU EHS plays a critical role in helping families access resources that help them support their families.

Parent Child Educators’ regular presence in the family home is a major source of support that helps parents get through difficult times.

EWU EHS needs to anticipate that each family going through financially hard times will also be experiencing a complex mix of other problems. This increases the difficulty of providing services which in turn increases the need for supervision, staff support, content manager expertise, and professional development.
Children Living in Rural Poverty

The Tri-Counties continue to have a substantially disproportionate rate of children living below the federal poverty level. When analyzed for comprehensive community risk factors across multiple domains (community, family, school, individual, child and family health, criminal justice, and substance abuse), these low income children are living in a world that poses numerous challenges which perpetuate the Tri-Counties’ extreme rural poverty.

The percent of children under the age of 5 years living below the federal poverty level in Ferry County is 31%, in Pend Oreille 30.9%, and in Stevens 23%. Statewide, the figure is 19.4%. [American Community Survey, U.S. Census]

Childhood poverty rates continue to be high through age 18 years with the following percentage living under the federal poverty levels:

- Ferry County – 29%
- Stevens County – 29%
- Pend Oreille County – 33%
- King County – 15%

Regional poverty has profound effects on infants and toddlers. These children live in a world that has limited access to non-routine medical services. For example, there is...
no pediatrician in the Tri-Counties. Other medical specialists are lacking. Children with non-routine health issues either go without treatment or must travel to Spokane or Seattle for appropriate medical care. It is not uncommon for EWU EHS to provide services to families as they obtain specialized health care in Spokane. On several occasions in the past year, EWU EHS staff provided services to parents whose child was admitted to intensive care or who was preparing for major surgery in Spokane.

Childhood immunization rates in the Tri-Counties is among the lowest in the State of Washington, which in turn has one of the lowest immunization rates in the United States. This resulted in multiple outbreaks of pertussis during the past three years.

Much of the available housing is old and needing repair. Demand for subsidized housing far exceeds availability. Food insecurity (lack of consistent access to affordable, nutritious and healthy food) is the norm. Social isolation ranges from families who are snowed in for days or weeks at a time (Onion Creek area) to the lack of a safe walking route from low income apartments to the services a mile away in downtown Newport (no sidewalks along a busy highway).

These children live in a world that has dangers not experienced in urban settings. Wood burning stoves in homes can burn children or burn down the building. Thirty percent of the housing in Pend Oreille County uses wood as the primary heating source. In Stevens County, wood heating is in 32% of the housing while it is used in 52.7% of the housing in Ferry County. This is compared to 4.5% statewide.

Car accidents can result from bald tires, icy roads, and animals on the highway. Toxic industrial pollutants in the Columbia River are absorbable by small children and by the fish that are caught in the river. It is prudent for parents to keep an eye out for cougars and
other wild animals when out with children in the forest or at campgrounds. A complete list of hazards to children is too lengthy to list here.

“Social and economic conditions are major determinants of health. Income, wealth, education, employment, neighborhood conditions and social policies interact in complex ways to affect our biology, health-related behaviors, environmental exposures, and availability and use of medical services. Health impacts associated with lower socioeconomic position (SEP) can begin before birth and build up throughout life. More simply stated, being poor is bad for health.” Social and Economic Determinants of Health, 2013, Department of Health, State of Washington.

While this may state the obvious, it is nonetheless helpful to keep in mind the complex interplay between poverty and health, especially the health of children. The following are facts about the world these children live in.

**Ferry County**

Health ranking – 39 out of 39 counties in Washington

Ratio of primary care physicians 1 per 2,519 residents (compared with 1 to 888 in King County)

Low immunization rates

Teen birth rate – 34 per 1,000 (compared to 20 per 1,000 in King County)

46.1 per 1,000 children accepted Child Abuse and Neglect referrals (above the state rate of 33.7 per 1,000 children)

One in four adults has no medical insurance.

One in four households has food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods.

Three fourths of adults do not eat enough fruits or vegetables.
Stevens County

Health ranking – 33 out of 39 counties in Washington

Ratio of primary care physicians – 1 per 1,673 residents (compared with 1 to 888 in King County)

Low immunization rates

Teen birth rate – 38 per 1,000 (compared to 20 per 1,000 in King County)

44.6 per 1,000 children accepted Child Abuse and Neglect referrals (above the state rate of 33.7 per 1,000 children)

One in six households has income less than the federal poverty level.

One in five adults has no medical insurance

One in nine households has food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods.

Three fourths of adults do not eat enough fruits or vegetables.

Pend Oreille County

Health ranking – 30 out of 39 counties in Washington

Ratio of primary care physicians 1 per 2,162 residents (compared with 1 to 888 in King County)

Low immunization rates

Teen birth rate – 48 per 1,000 (compared to 20 per 1,000 in King County)

57 per 1,000 children accepted Child Abuse and Neglect referrals (above the state rate of 33.7 per 1,000 children)

One in five households have income less than the federal poverty level

One in five adults has no medical insurance.

One in nine households has food insecurity and limited access to healthy foods

Over three fourths of adults do not eat enough fruits and vegetables.
**Child Abuse and Neglect**

The rate of child abuse and neglect rates is substantially higher in the Tri-Counties than in the State of Washington as a whole. A corollary is the substantial increase in EWU EHS children involved with Child Protective Services (CPS). Last program year, 21.68% of families enrolled in EWU EHS were at some point involved with CPS. That is an increase from the previous program year’s 8.7% level of CPS involved families. By their very nature, CPS situations are service-intensive and require significantly more EWU EHS resources than do other families not involved with CPS.

This increase of investigated child abuse and neglect cases has resulted in more foster care placements for EWU EHS enrolled children. Last year, 9 such children were in relative placement foster care, 10 in non-relative foster care, and 8 were in the custody of a legal guardian. Over 15% of the children enrolled in EWU EHS last program year were in foster care. As way of comparison, in 2008, only 5% of EWU EHS children were in any type of foster care or guardianship.

EWU EHS services follow the child, even when the child is removed from the biological family’s home. This program supports CPS efforts at reunification whenever possible. This can include providing services to not only the foster parents, but also to one or both of the biological parents.

**Illegal Drug Culture**

The systemic poverty is one reason for the ready availability of illegal drugs in the Tri-Counties. Prescription painkillers can be easily, but illegally, obtained from drug dealers. Oxycontin and hydrocodone (called oxy and hydro) are popular but more expensive than
meth, which is an illegal drug of choice for many. Black tar heroin is reportedly easy to purchase.

Illegal drug availability was discussed with the December, 2013 EWU EHS Policy Council as part of this year’s community assessment activities. When asked how long it would take for them to purchase marijuana, oxycontin or hydrocodone, two of the members said that they believed that they could walk to a seller, buy the drugs and walk back to our meeting within 30 minutes. Other Policy Council members agreed. [For the record, none of the Policy Council left to verify that such a purchase could actually take place that quickly.]

The impact of the illegal drug culture was also discussed. Young parents living in small communities often must make a choice to keep friendships with drug users or to abandon their long-time friendships to avoid drug involvement. The loss of social connection and support is a price that parents often pay if they decide not to be part of the drug culture.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

Rural poverty inherently increases the severity of risk factors for families and communities. In response to the increased complexity of problems, EWU EHS needs to increase its professional development, training and supervision.

Retention of skilled and experienced staff is critical for EWU EHS. Preventing burn-out is an important factor in staff retention.

Building and maintaining relationships with other key agencies is an important way that EWU EHS can maximize its effectiveness in providing high quality services to increasingly more difficult family and community situations.

EWU EHS needs to continue its “grow your own” approach with its staff to assure that the program maintains a strengths-based philosophy to service delivery.
Getting Ready for School

Preparing a child to be ready for school is hard work. It is a full-time job that starts even before the child is born as parents prepare for the baby’s birth by receiving prenatal care and focusing on the health of both the mother and child.

It continues for the next several years, as the parents make countless decisions that will affect the child’s ability to move successfully into kindergarten and later grades.

Parents living in the Tri-Counties face unique and seemingly overwhelming challenges during the first 3 years of their child’s life because of the geographic and social isolation, the across-the-board lack of essential services, and the chronic regional poverty.

Yet, even with the many barriers, parents in the Tri-Counties can be successful in getting their young child ready to be successful in school. It’s not easy, but parents can do it!

Ultimately the measure of success in getting infants and toddlers ready for school was summed up by 2 EWU EHS parents who responded to the question “What have you and your boys gotten out of Early Head Start and how are your lives going to be different because of this program.”

What does this mean for families?

EWU EHS can help families increase their attitudes, skills and knowledge about getting their child ready for school.

EWU EHS works with, not at, parents to support school readiness.

School readiness activities are individualized for each child.

The EWU EHS school readiness approach is consistent with local school districts and Washington State expectations.

EWU EHS plays an active role in supporting a child’s transition into Head Start or other post-EHS settings.

EWU EHS has experience and success in supporting parents’ future education.
Without a pause, the parents said that “Our boys are going to be life-long learners who we know will be successful at whatever they try to do.”

They went on to say that in the past they did not want their children to go to public school, but now they are looking forward to their 2 boys starting the local preschool. The children had developmental delays and the parents each had major health, mental health and substance abuse issues that triggered CPS involvement. The family lived in a remote location up a long dirt road where the family was socially isolated, in part because they wanted to escape the local drug culture.

Even with those multiple risk factors, the 2 boys are now doing well in pre-school with parents who are committed to their educations. The family is actively involved at the local school instead of avoiding it.

What happened and why did things work out for this family?

To answer this question, let’s look at the EWU EHS’s school readiness approach. EWU EHS focuses on preparing children for school by assuring that each EWU Early Head child is either:

Typically developing in all domains or the child’s parents are actively engaging in early intervention services for their child for the areas of identified developmental concern or delay.

For more about the program’s school readiness approach and activities, see EWU EHS’ Annual Report, 2012-2013; School Readiness Assessment Data Analysis: Summary Report, February 2013. The upcoming EWU EHS Self-Assessment will contain a detailed analysis of the program’s school readiness effectiveness.
Looked at more broadly, preparing infants and toddlers for success in school involves several key activities:

1) Conducting individual developmental screenings and ongoing assessment to determine if a child is developing appropriately across all developmental domains and if not, arranging the appropriate intervention.

2) Aligning EWU EHS curriculum and assessment with state outcome measures. [Note: EWU EHS upcoming Self-Assessment will more fully describe how this program aligns with the state requirements.]

3) Providing comprehensive, individualized strengths-based services.

4) Assuring that the child’s health and nutrition needs are met in their first 3 years of life. This should start prenatally and continue with well-child exams, immunizations, and non-routine medical services as needed.

5) Supporting effective transitions between educational settings.

6) Recognizing that the child’s parents are the first and most important teachers and treating the parents with respect and dignity in that role.

7) Developing parent advocacy skills that will support the child’s future learning in school.

8) Encouraging continued parent education which may include obtaining a G.E.D., enrolling in a certificate or technical skills program, attending community college or earning a 4 year degree.

It is essential for parents to view education as a positive experience for their child. Many low-income parents had bad experiences while going through school and have a negative view of formal education.

EWU EHS parents often express that they do not have the skills to advocate for themselves and for their child. Going into a school, medical office, or social service agency can be intimidating for parents who do not have the communication and advocacy skills needed to navigate these systems.

EWU EHS parents frequently describe that they are treated rudely in such settings and that they feel invisible, disrespected and ignored. The constant message that they receive is that they are not respected as people, as parents, and as families. These parents express the change in their individual and family lives because of their involvement in EWU
EHS which sends the message to them of “You Matter as a Parent. You Can Make a Difference in the Life of Your Child. You Are Not In This Alone.”

**Head Start and ECEAP**

The local Head Start program serves 3 to 5 year olds and is operated by the Rural Resources Community Action Program in Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties. Head Start centers are located in Chewelah, Colville, Kettle Falls and Newport. Rural Resources also operates ECEAP classrooms in Cusick, Springdale and Valley at local school district locations.

Head Start gives enrollment priority to 4 year olds which means that 3 year old children graduating from EWU EHS are not assured of getting into Head Start. Because of increased coordination between the local Head Start, ECEAP and EWU EHS, more children are moving out of Early Head Start at age 3 years into the other two programs.

Last program year, 34% of EHS graduating children went directly into Head Start, 6% into ECEAP and 26% into Developmental Preschool or other preschool. Only 33% transitioned into their home setting. This is a significant increase from the 2007-2008 program year, when only 17.14% of EWU EHS graduates transitioned directly into Head Start, 5.71% into ECEAP and 14.29% into Developmental Preschool or other preschool. In other words, the percentage of children graduating from EWU EHS and transitioning into the next formal educational setting has almost doubled, going from 37.14% in 2007-2008 up to 65.71% in 2012-2013.

**Public Schools**

Of the several public school districts in the Tri-Counties, only 2 districts (Colville and Newport) have more than 1,000 students while 13 have less than 500 students. The
Evergreen School District is the smallest with 20 students. The number of districts and their small sizes makes coordination of educational services difficult, especially for children with disabilities. The student population is predominantly low-income, as seen by the high percentage of children eligible for the free or reduced lunch program. In one district, **100% of the children are eligible** for that program!

These districts continue to experience funding challenges, including limited tax base, difficulties passing bond levies, and increased federal and state requirements.

These school districts also must keep current on new state education standards, measurements and evaluations. As will be described in the upcoming EWU EHS Self-Assessment, this program uses the Parents As Teachers (P.A.T.) curriculum which aligns with developmental domains set out in the Washington State school readiness requirements. EWU EHS also uses the OUNCE assessment system for regularly screening all enrolled children to measure progress in meeting development in those domains.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District and County</th>
<th>Enrolled Students as of May, 2013</th>
<th>Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>Special Education Students</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curlew (Ferry)</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orient (Ferry)</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic (Ferry)</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keller (Ferry)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>K to Grade 6. Serves Colville Indian Reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inchelium (Ferry)</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Serves Colville Indian Reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen (Stevens)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>K to Grade 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northport (Stevens)</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion Creek (Stevens)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettle Falls (Stevens)</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colville (Stevens)</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit Valley (Stevens)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewelah Valley (Stevens)</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia (Stevens)</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Walker (Stevens)</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loon Lake (Stevens)</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>K to Grade 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellpinit (Stevens County)</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Serves Spokane Indian Reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selkirk (Pend Oreille)</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusick (Pend Oreille)</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport (Pend Oreille)</td>
<td>1,088</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Pre-K to Grade 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Statewide rates for free/reduced lunch is 46.1% and for special education is 13%.
In December, 2013, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction released the Washington State Report Card that includes information for each school district in the state. [http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?year=2012-13.]

This Report Card has extensive information about the school readiness of children entering Tri-Counties’ public school full time kindergartens. Results with fewer than 10 students are not shown.

The following charts show the 2012-2013 results for the Colville School District, which is the largest in the region. Other districts’ results can be found on-line at the above website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Social-Emotional</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Physical</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Cognitive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills Typical of Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>100.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills Typical of Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Range of Skills of Entering Kindergartners – Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills Typical of Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of birth-2 year old children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 2-3 year old children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 3-5 year old preschool children</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills typical of 5-6 year old kindergartners</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent of Students who Demonstrate Characteristics of Entering Kindergartners in Multiple Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 of 6 Domains</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>100.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent of Students who Demonstrate Characteristics of Entering Kindergartners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social-Emotional</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NorthEast Washington ESD 101

NorthEast Washington ESD 101 (NEWESD 101) is an essential part of the Tri-Counties education delivery system. It supplements local school districts with much-needed expertise and services in:

- Birth to Three Disabilities (see next section);
- Fiscal;
- Administration;
- Speech, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy; and
- USDA Food Service.
As described in the next section (*Children with Disabilities*), NEWESD 101 and EWU EHS work very closely on coordinating services for children with suspected and documented disabilities.

**Education for Parents**

Whether they know it or not, parents are constantly modeling attitudes and behavior. Parents that have a positive attitude about education send a powerful message to their child about the value of learning, including higher education. By furthering their own educations, parents are setting an example for their children. The parents in the Tri-Counties have limited opportunities to obtain additional education and there are numerous barriers. Yet, EWU EHS has seen parents as well as its own staff obtain certificates, 2 year and 4 year degrees.

Spokane Community College has branch campuses in Colville and in Newport that provide educational opportunities for parents and other adults in the Tri-Counties. The practicalities of accessing additional education can be challenging because of a number of factors.

Low income parents need to balance the constant demands of caring for a child or children, the financial pressures of making ends meet each day and the time and attention required by college courses.

A parent who wants more education must find a way to get to the school setting, fill out unfamiliar paperwork to enroll and to hopefully get some form of financial aid, adjust to the routine of college coursework, develop study skills and learn how to use computers.
This is a daunting endeavor for any parent, let alone one who is low income and living in the Tri-Counties.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

Preparing children to be ready for school will continue to be a high national, state and local priority.

Aligning with the national and state standards and expectations is a critical role for EWU EHS.

To be effective, school readiness activities must be integrated into other EWU EHS services.

Additional professional development and content manager support of EWU EHS staff will be essential in the individualization of school readiness activities.

School readiness requires integrating EWU EHS services with other key agencies.

Parent engagement is a cornerstone of school readiness.
Children with Disabilities

As of December, 2013, 39 children had completed Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP). There were 3 more in process and an additional 11 pending referrals. Of these, 13 are currently enrolled in EWU EHS.

EWU EHS has provided services to children with many types of disabilities, ranging from speech or gross motor delays to a baby who was born with part of her brain outside her cranium.

Recently, twins who were severely physically abused in infancy (including fractured bones) graduated from EWU EHS after 3 years in the program. Because of the trauma, these twins could not speak until they were 30 months old.

NEWESD 101 is the Tri-County Local Lead agency for Birth to Three Early Intervention. Since hiring a new Family Resource Coordinator in November, 2012, there has been significantly increased coordination of services with children enrolled in EWU EHS.

The new coordinator (who is EWU EHS’ former Child Development and Disabilities Manager) works closely with EWU EHS staff in identifying children with possible disabilities.
delays and to integrate services for those infants and toddlers who have an Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP).

The coordination of IFSP services requires expertise in dealing with a wide range of disabilities as well as school districts which have a responsibility to provide such services. This can be challenging for Tri-County school districts, many of which are very small and have limited experience or resources to address complex disabilities issues. Quality and consistency of services can vary widely. School districts often have no services during summer.

The coordination between NEWESD 101 and EWU EHS is an essential service for infants and toddlers with suspected or confirmed delays or disabilities. The close working relationship takes many forms, including:

- Conducting routine developmental screenings of all EWU EHS children;
- Prompt referral to NEWESD 101 of all suspected delays;
- Individualizing EWU EHS services to support IFSP goals;
- Priority enrollment in EWU EHS for infants and toddlers with suspected or diagnosed delays;
- Assuring that at least 10% of EWU EHS enrolled children have IFSPs (Usually, this figure is closer to 15% or more);
- Supporting transition to the next developmentally appropriate setting, including developmental pre-school; and
- Actively participating in the Tri-County’s Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) of which the EWU EHS Director is the chairperson.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?

EWU EHS disabilities are inherently complex and require program consistency and expertise in identifying possible disabilities, following up on referrals and individualizing services.

EWU EHS plays an essential role in providing disabilities services in the Tri-Counties.

Disabilities services require high level interagency collaboration.

In October, 2013, the distribution of the children with IFSPs in the following school districts was:

- Chewelah – 6
- Nine Mile Falls – 4
- Colville – 10
- Orient – 0
- Deer Park – 2
- Republic – 3
- Kettle Falls – 1
- Riverside – 0
- Loon Lake – 1
- Selkirk – 0
- Mary Walker – 1
- Usk – 0
- Newport – 4
- Valley – 1
- Inchelium – 2
  \(\text{(on-reservation)}\)
- Wellpinit – 1
  \(\text{(on-reservation)}\)
**Other Child Development and Child Care Programs**

EWU Early Head Start remains the **only** comprehensive infant/toddler program in the Tri-Counties.

Decreased state subsidies, low profit margins and increased state regulation have made it difficult for private child care businesses (center or family) to remain open.

There are no licensed child care centers in Ferry County. It has one family childcare provider that can serve a maximum of 12 children (of which 4 can be infants and 4 can be toddlers).

There are 23 licensed child care providers in Stevens County, 64% being child care centers and 36% being family child care facilities.

Four child care providers serve 107 children in Pend Oreille County. Three of these providers operate centers and the fourth is a family child care. *[Child Care in Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties, 2013, Child Care Aware of Washington.]*

Informal child care includes leaving infants and toddlers with friends, relatives, and neighbors. Older children
often are left to fend for themselves and their younger siblings.

A recent visit by a EWU EHS staff member last summer to a city park in the Tri-Counties started off pleasant enough with dozens of children playing and self-organizing games. Some, including children who looked about 5 or 6, were playing in a creek that runs through the park. One young boy was walking to the creek with a fishing pole over his shoulder and tackle box in his hand.

Noticeably absent were adults. Occasionally, crying could be heard as children got into arguments and fights. Then, a van drove up and distributed lunches to the children. Later, EWU EHS parents explained it is common knowledge in the community that the park is an often used location for drug dealing and drug use. The picture changes from something out of a Norman Rockwell painting to a much less appealing situation of children on their own for the entire day without adult supervision and eating free sack lunches while people are injecting themselves with drugs while sitting in cars parked just a few feet from children. At least one police vehicle drove by without stopping.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EWU EARLY HEAD START?**

EWU EHS provides services to families that lack child care which is an essential resource for employment.

The lack of child care increases stress on parents and tension within a family, resulting in greater need for effective EHS services.
Education, Health, Nutrition, and Service Needs of Eligible Children and Families

The needs of eligible children and their families are significant because:

- Education, health, nutrition and social services are inadequate and difficult to access, with transportation, geographic barriers, and limited services being major factors.
- Services are centralized in Colville and Newport, further limiting access.
- Funding for state and local government services has not kept up with increasing needs, resulting in continued impacts on the ability of agencies to provide services.
- Confusion about how to maintain continuity of medical insurance coverage between Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act jeopardizes coverage for entire families.
- Local non-profit organizations are straining under the burden of providing additional services while having substantially fewer resources.
- Families often need to travel out of the area to access medical and dental care for infants and toddlers because of a lack of primary providers and specialists.
- Mental health services are limited.
EWU EHS parents noted the following needs:

- More medical clinics and medical staff
- More quality doctors and specialists
- More medical services generally
- More information about health
- A permanent pediatrician
- Dental clinics (with skills for teaching parents of infants and toddlers)
- A mental health specialist with infant and toddler experience
- Increased health information/awareness
- Car seat safety and immunization information
- Child nutrition
- More affordable food
- More information about nutrition
- Increased access to food, including farmers markets
- Transportation
- Parenting classes
- More social services
Community Resources

Health, nutrition, and social services for the 0-3 years of age population have not increased and remain at low levels. The realities are that:

- State and federal funding reductions will continue into the foreseeable future, limiting resources available in the Tri-Counties.
- There is uncertainty about the extent of possible upcoming federal funding cuts. Financially strapped local agencies, including EWU EHS, need to plan how to provide essential services, but do not have the information necessary to make informed decisions.
- The Tri-Counties has a shortage of service providers with the expertise needed for infants and toddlers.
- The Tri-Counties has limited ability to support increasingly complex programs (examples include lack of funding, local expertise, facility options or necessary support services).

Existing community resources continue to provide essential services to the eligible children and families. Major resources include:

- The local food banks.
➢ Mental health and substance abuse services agencies.
➢ Local religious and non-profits organizations.
➢ Job training and educational opportunities provided by Career Path Services,
  Spokane Community College and Washington State University.