



Opportunities
Exchange

IDEAS

Newsletter | Vol. 2 | No. 4



Spearheading Systems Change: the Oregon Story

Boosting the supply of high-quality care for infants and toddlers is a multi-faceted process. A host of changes—in state-level policy and finance as well as program-level administration—are needed. Opportunities Exchange has worked closely with public and private sector leaders, funders, and implementors to shepherd change across the field. Over the past two years, we have provided significant support to leaders in the State of Oregon. A recent case study, [Building Back Better: Reinventing Oregon's Child Care Industry](#), by Martha McDonald, describes this effort.

Visionary leaders in Coos and Curry Counties—a rural area on the southwest coast—played a key role in enabling change. In the Fall of 2020, they launched a [Shared Services pilot](#) which, in addition to modeling the potential for scale among small settings, quickly identified a significant challenge with public reimbursement rates for infants and toddlers. This led to deeper analysis and discussion and—ultimately—a [brief](#), released by the Ford Family Foundation, to underscore the issue and encourage reform. Leaders also testified before a Legislative Task Force on Access to Quality Affordable Child Care, participated in a statewide [Shared Services Co-Design Team](#), and worked with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and other partners across the state to identify opportunities to expand use of provider child care management technology. These are just a few, among many, steps taken to successfully realize change.

The Oregon story is defined by unique—and perhaps serendipitous—alignment of opportunities and support from both public and private sector partners. However, systems change occurred because each piece was reviewed through a Shared Services lens and used to build buy-in, leverage support, and weave a collaborative, sustainable approach to reform. While every state will have different players, opportunities, and funding, a Shared Services lens can be used to shape a reform strategy, identify appropriate leadership, and facilitate meaningful collaboration.

Shared Services is not a 'one size fits all' replication strategy but rather an innovative approach to leadership, management, finance, and accountability aimed at harnessing the power of technology and shared resources at many levels. Federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and Coronavirus relief initiatives can be used to start and expand Shared Services for center- and home-based care. Private sector funders can play a catalytic role, encouraging innovation focused on re-inventing ECE service delivery. Right now—as the ECE sector emerges from a pandemic—the approach offers the opportunity to rebuild the sector for sustainability in a new world.

States seeking to implement systemic change have much to learn from the Oregon story, which, in addition to being described in the case study, will also be a session topic at the [2021 National Shared Services Conference](#) in Austin Texas.

[Click Here to Read the Case Study](#)



The banner features the Opportunities Exchange logo on the left, which consists of two overlapping circles (one green, one blue) above the text "Opportunities Exchange". In the center, the text reads "2021 NATIONAL SHARED SERVICES Technical Conference" in white and yellow. On the right, there is a graphic of a lightbulb with rays emanating from it, set against a silhouette of a head, with the words "THINK BIG" in white and yellow. Below the main text, it says "September 29—October 1, 2021 | Austin, TX" and "Register Now!" in white and blue.



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