

# Definition of Key Terms

It is critical that all agencies, policy makers, stakeholders and the public should have a common understanding and shared definitions of several key terms to successfully collaborate on making progress on the key strategies identified as a result of this needs assessment. This section includes definitions of several key terms critical to these efforts. These working definitions were developed in collaboration with the core team and the Nevada Early Childhood Council. All participants agreed that these definitions are not absolute and can change over time based on the needs of the community as well as emerging research in early childhood.

## Quality Early Childhood Care and Education

A high quality early childhood program is an inclusive environment that offers services at the highest possible levels for all children and families. These programs provide a safe environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of all children. High quality environments celebrate and explore the culture, backgrounds and individuality of their children and families. The indicators of quality include but are not limited to: policies, procedures and administrative practices that are best practices for the workforce, families and children. This would include ample age-appropriate materials; appropriate group size and ratios for each classroom and use of appropriate assessments to assess children's learning and development. Teaching approaches are individualized for each child and are active, stimulating and engaging. Thoughtful standards about health and safety are considered at the licensing level and beyond. Families and community partners are included as valued partners and are invited into all aspects of care and education. The quality indicators combine together to create an environment that leads to the highest outcomes and lifelong success for the youngest learners in our state.

## Availability of Early Childhood Education and Care

Availability of early childhood education and care means that all counties have settings that provide families with equitable access to affordable and high-quality early childhood education.

## Vulnerable or underserved children

For the purposes of this grant, vulnerable or underserved families are those who

- are at or under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level
- reside in rural areas
- reside in tribal areas or are members of a tribe
- speak a language other than English
- Have a child with a disability
- Have a child under 3 years of age
- Experiencing Homelessness
- Involved with Child Protective Services, or
- Child has 4 or more adverse childhood experiences or environments

#### ACES from CDC (2019)

- emotional abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- mother treated violently
- substance abuse in the household
- mental illness in the household
- parental separation or divorce
- incarcerated household member
- emotional neglect
- physical neglect

#### ACES from The Health Federation of Philadelphia (2018)

- experiencing racism,
- witnessing violence,
- living in an unsafe neighborhood,
- living in foster care
- experiencing bullying

### Children in Rural Areas

Given the lack of resources even in what would be considered urban areas of Nevada, the consensus seems to be that all of Nevada should be considered rural. However, to narrow the areas a bit further, those who are more rural of those who live outside of one of the major cities in Clark or Washoe county (Reno, Sparks, Las Vegas area, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City), and Carson City.