

Stories

From the field

“After all, we are life-long learners like those we serve.”

Susan Ludwig, Director of Great Expectations, Newberg High School Child Development Program

Great Expectations is a high school based child development and parenthood education program. Like many high school based teen parent programs across the state, Great Expectations began work with a Quality Improvement Specialist last year, using the QRIS standards as a guide. Susan Ludwig, program director, described, “We have been motivated by a wonderful technical advisor Crystal Persi, who has first-hand experience directing teen parent and child development education. Additionally, we have been encouraged by our support networks, our partner high school teen parent program, McMinnville Bear Hugs, Child Care Resource and Referral, OAEYC, OACCD and OCCD staff.”



Susan shared the value of Oregon’s standards as “guiding frameworks to optimize services”, including the Oregon Registry, OCCD Credentials, and QRIS standards. During the self-assessment phase, the team had some “initial anxiety” but found that they were doing well overall and focused on several changes to make improvements in the long run. “Ultimately, the process helped staff see the quality of their daily efforts, qualifications, and our overall program service delivery.” Susan’s experience spoke to the ongoing nature of continuous quality improvement and the impact over time. “Now that we are in our 2nd year of this process, the concrete benefits far outweigh any perceived challenge or temporary concern about meeting all the standards.”

Great Expectations also got “creative” about making time to review policies, procedures and documents required for QRIS documentation. “Our time with our children is our focus, naturally, so taking time to review documents related to our QRIS portfolio is a juggle. However this is a transition period that is temporary.”



Great Expectations has focused on the team’s training and education and currently all of the educators have earned college degrees and are in the process of obtaining their Infant Toddler Credential. “Our ultimate goal is to reach the 5 star rating with our portfolio submission.” Congratulations to Great Expectations for their excellent work.