



**Providing the highest standard of learning for all children and the tools for providers to take them there**

## Cultivate Learning

Founded by Gail Joseph, PhD and Associate Professor of Early Childhood and Family Studies, Cultivate Learning started out as a single program of three staff in a small office, with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In the last ten years, it has grown into an organization that delivers guidance and expertise in multiple aspects of early learning success for children and educators.

Over the years, we have received backing and partnership opportunities from the Office of Head Start, the Washington State Department of Early Learning, the Raikes Foundation, and others who believe deeply in our commitment to equity and access. Since then, Cultivate Learning has established itself as the bridge between research and practice for high-quality teaching and learning environments.

### What are the beliefs that hold us all together?

- Every child deserves a strong start.
- Behind every child's success is an empowered educator.
- A powerful early learning workforce strengthens communities inside and outside early learning programs.



# Snapshot of Cultivate Learning Programs and Projects

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The EarlyEdU Alliance® is a collaboration of early childhood experts and stakeholders working to meet the need for high-quality college degree programs that are accessible, affordable, and relevant to current and prospective early learning professionals. The EarlyEdU Alliance has developed in-person and online higher education courses, and a multimedia library. The library contains videos of exemplary teaching practices, faculty lectures and interviews, and training resources. The Alliance is committed to supporting and transforming the early learning workforce, its system leaders, and its learning providers. Since 2015, over 90 institutions of higher education have piloted EarlyEdU Alliance courses and technology, including tribal colleges and universities and Hispanic serving institutions. Starting in 2018, several institutions, including Arizona State University, are using EarlyEdU Alliance course resources to establish and expand competency-based online, early childhood degree programs.

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Circle Time Magazine and Meaningful Makeover are two dynamic professional development web series. Circle Time Magazine is intended for early childhood educators serving children birth to age 5, and their families. Expert guests share the latest research and tips for teaching, new materials, favorite books, and examples of learning in action for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Meaningful Makeover shows how small changes to an early learning environment can make a big impact on children's learning. Each episode showcases simple improvements providers can make immediately. Educational environment experts team up to make over early learning spaces and discuss the secrets and science behind key design elements to promote learning opportunities, greater accessibility, more engagement, and happier children.

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Expanded Learning Opportunities

Cultivate Learning is broadening our scope to include expanded learning opportunities (ELO). ELO provides a wide range of enrichment opportunities to school-age children and youth aged 5-18. These programs operate before and after school, during summers, and on weekends in diverse settings, such as parks and recreation departments, youth centers, licensed child care facilities, sports organizations, and community service programs. After almost 20 years of work in evaluation, system building, and professional development for early learning programs, we are expanding our work to improve access to high-quality educational programming, from birth to age 18.

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Coaching Companion™

Coaching has played an instrumental role in helping educators improve child outcomes. To further support coaching efforts, the Coaching Companion, developed at Cultivate Learning, is a web-based video observation and feedback application with over one thousand users. The Coaching Companion helps coaches, faculty and educators engage in effective coaching cycles by tracking individual progress through goal-setting, focused observation, and reflection and feedback cycles. Educators upload video and documentation of interactions with children in their learning environments and receive detailed feedback from a coach, college instructor or peer through the application. EarlyEdU member faculty use the Higher Education Coaching Companion to give quality individualized support to students pursuing degrees in early learning. The custom Coaching Companion is used by coaches in Washington State Early Achievers and is currently being customized for use in Oregon and Tennessee professional development systems.