The September, I had the opportunity to attend the *State of Children and Families Early Learning Leadership Brunch*.  This Brunch is hosted every fall by our regional early learning coalition Northwest Early Learning\* (NWEL).   It is at this annual event that NWEL also releases the *State of Children and Families report*.

As a parent of young children, research around the early childhood is of particular interest to me. The early years, prenatal through age eight, are increasingly recognized as foundational to a child’s long term health and achievement.  A growing body of research points to early childhood as a critical time of human development that holds lasting impacts for children and communities.

One of the great things about the *State of Children and Families Report* is that the research is easy to read and is broken down into five sections: Children, Families, Professionals, Schools, and Systems. So it was easy for me to find data points – such as the projection that in ten years 25% of all students in the US will be English Language Learners, or the fact that Skagit County families get their information more often from social media than any other communication source. Interesting.

You can read the *State of Children and Families* report on the NWESD website. And if you want to dig deeper, the [Center on the Developing Child at Harvard](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/) is another excellent resource for exploring the intersections between early childhood science, program innovation and collective impact that improves outcomes for young children.

\* Founded in 2005, NWEL is an early learning planning initiative with members representing over fifty organizations across Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties.  NWEL works toward the vision that “**all children have high quality early care and learning experiences that support optimal growth and development leading to success in school and life**”.