



INAUGURAL COHORT EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

PATHWAVES DREW HIGHLIGHTS FROM
PSED'S FINAL EVALUATION REPORT,
PUBLISHED AUGUST 2024

EVALUATION PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

Pathwaves partnered with the Puget Sound Educational Service District's Strategy, Evaluation and Learning Team to conduct an evaluation. ***The purpose of this evaluation was to understand how the Pathwaves Fellowship supported Fellows' growth, placement sites' anti-racist leadership, and contributed to impacts in the early childhood policy ecosystem.*** The evaluation intended to support learning and improvement during implementation of the first Pathwaves cohort.

Utilizing co-designed evaluation practices, the Evaluation Team reported results back to participants for discussion, shared meaning-making throughout the Fellowship, and with a Final Report.



Pathwaves WA's mission is to ***build the collective power of leaders of color to transform early childhood systems so that every child and their community thrives.***

The Pathwaves Fellowship brings BIPOC individuals into the early childhood policy sector through an employment-based Fellowship. It posts Fellows in placement sites: organizations engaging in early childhood policy sector in Washington state. The inaugural Pathwaves Fellowship ran from October 2022 to June 2024.

RESULTS: FELLOWS' GROWTH

To what extent and in what ways is the Pathwaves Fellowship contributing to Fellows' individual growth and collective growth?

Areas of strength:

- Deepened exposure to the diversity of systems and programs in the early childhood sector
- Networking opportunities for Fellows and BIPOC leaders
- Fellows' work with their placement sites helped deepen Fellows' understanding of broader contexts and concepts in early childhood policy
- Deepened exposure to the diversity of roles in the early childhood policy sector

Opportunities for improvement:

- Pathwaves' Professional Development days could have further deepened Fellows' understanding of:
 - systems and policies in the early childhood sector in Washington state
 - broader contexts and concepts related to the early childhood sector
- Fellows desired more opportunities to apply their lived experience to their placement site work.

RESULTS: CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Fellows remarked on the **opportunities to develop and expand their networks**, build connections among host sites, Fellows, and to the organizations in the early childhood policy ecosystem.

Collaboration among host organizations, Fellows, and Pathwaves could have been stronger with clearer expectation-setting and more streamlined and frequent collaboration.

The end-of-Fellowship survey addressed whether the Fellowship met its intent:

Areas of strength in meeting intent:

- Build relationships between host organizations, Pathwaves staff, and Fellows
- Provide additional support and capacity for host organization's work
- Contribute to increased BIPOC representation in early childhood policy

Opportunities for improvement in meeting intent:

- Support stronger connections between host organizations
- Stronger contribution to systemic change in early childhood policy

RESULTS: PLACEMENT SITES ANTI-RACIST LEADERSHIP

To what extent and in what ways is the Pathwaves Fellowship contributing to host organizations' anti-racist leadership?

Areas of strength:

- Host organizations appreciated information and conversations focused on their work with Fellows, relevant to their organizations, and reflective of where they were in their anti-racism journeys.

Opportunities for improvement:

- Pathwaves needed more intentional expectation-setting around Fellowship goals, including for anti-racist approaches to the work.
- Placements wanted more support for anti-racist leadership efforts, especially through trainings and a more effective community of practice structure.



RESULTS: EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICY ECOSYSTEM

To what extent and in what ways is the Pathwaves Fellowship contributing to change in the early childhood policy ecosystem?

System change is a long-term goal. This evaluation sought to understand early shifts towards system change in the inaugural Pathwaves Fellowship cohort, some highlights include:

- Pathwaves prepared Fellows to enter a career path to match their interests post-Fellowship.
- Placement site supervisors focused on providing opportunities for Fellows to lead in policy spaces and some saw an impact of hosting a Fellow with lived experience.

Challenges of System Change:

- Placement site supervisors named a tension inherent in preparing Fellows to impact the early childhood policy sector while acknowledging that systems are often changed from within. Fellows must learn to navigate these systems in order to impact them.