

## **Media Advisory – Feb. 9, 2010**

Contact: Christopher Schwarzen

Office: 425-388-3883

Email: Christopher.Schwarzen@snoco.org

### **County receives nearly \$2.5 million for early education**

Snohomish County will receive \$2.45 million in federal stimulus funds to provide comprehensive, high-quality Early Head Start services during the next two years.

The funding will allow the county to provide services to additional infants, toddlers, and pregnant women in Marysville, Arlington, Granite Falls and Sultan prior to their likely enrollment in the county run Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), which serves nearly 1,000 preschool students.

Much like ECEAP, the Early Head Start program provides family-centered services for low-income families and is designed to promote the development of the children while helping parents fulfill their roles and move toward self-sufficiency. The program provides families with parent education, health and dental screenings, social services, nutrition, and developmental assessments.

“Early Head Start will help us reach vulnerable children and families at an even younger age, providing comprehensive child development and family support services that enhance the physical, social and intellectual development of participating children,” Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said. “Ensuring that infants and toddlers have good health, strong families and positive early learning experiences will lay the foundation for success throughout their lives.”

The inclusion of Early Head Start programs in Snohomish County provides an opportunity to bring public health, early intervention, housing assistance and a strong comprehensive early childhood program to wrap around Early Head Start families who later continue developing those skills through ECEAP.

Strong community partnerships – including school districts, nonprofit agencies, and community colleges – will provide intensive services that nurture children and promote self-sufficiency in parents.

For more information on the county’s early learning programs, call Snohomish County ECEAP Manager Joe Varano at 425-388-7251.

###