Traveling to East Africa is a wonderful opportunity to stay connected with our families, languages, and culture. On a recent trip, I (Iftin) visited a school where students eat, live, sleep and study. The principal told me the story of a ten-year-old boy enrolled at the school. Ten-year-olds in Africa have a lot of responsibility and independence compared to children in the USA. This boy disappeared from the school every afternoon, and teachers were growing concerned. Where did he go?

One afternoon, the principal followed the boy. The boy walked for 90 minutes, carrying a heavy bag. The principal saw the boy go to his own home where his mother and two sisters were waiting. The boy opened the bag and fed his family with food he received from the school. He had felt guilty, having so much food while the rest of his family was hungry.

In response, the school added grades for younger children so the boy’s little sisters could attend and have their basic needs met. The boy’s mother is now free to work and earn income. It was profound to see a system designed for one child quickly change and adapt to lift up the whole family.

As Voices of Tomorrow grows, we draw on East African strengths to create a holistic and community-oriented system so entire families thrive. Children grow and learn best when the important people in their lives – parents, grandparents, aunts, siblings, and child care providers – have what they need to be successful. We constantly listen to our families and adapt to meet needs. We started with high-quality preschool. Now, we provide wraparound support for children and their families that includes access to education, health care, mental health care, food, and housing.

We offer dual-language Early Learning, trauma-healing home visiting for parents of infants and toddlers, health screenings and referrals, and wraparound support that includes case management and systems navigation. We stick with our families so everyone in the community is lifted up!

Please join us in community,

ZAMZAM MOHAMED  
Co-Founder

IFTIN HAGIMOAHAMED  
Co-Founder
In the past, Dahabo Khalid rarely took time for herself as she raised her young children. She says most Somali parents consider attending a wedding or family gathering as taking time for themselves. Now, almost two years after enrolling in the Mind, Body, and Culture (MBC) home visiting program, Khalid makes time for herself weekly with the encouragement of her home visitor.

Khalid was delighted and surprised that her home visitor could also provide her with necessary and practical items. For example, she received a brand-new pink car seat that was a perfect fit for her daughter.

Khalid says her bond with her children has grown as a result of MBC. She appreciates each child’s uniqueness and responds to them in ways that are appropriate for their developmental stages.

“I already know how to [parent] because I’m on my third child,” she said. “What this program has allowed me to do is understand my children better and how to engage with each one of them accordingly.”

DAHABO KHALID
MBC Participant
Early Learning By The Numbers

466 children were enrolled Early Learning and Home Visiting programs

278 children were screened for health concerns and developmental delays

186 families received resources and referrals for health and developmental concerns

544 screenings were conducted

1,398 estimated children benefitted from family support services

$221,526 in rental assistance distributed

89 families received rental assistance to stay housed

30 children with trauma and complex needs received wraparound support, therapies, and service navigation
"I really enjoy going to VOT program, I feel like the program is really warm. I feel like there is a lot of support from VOT. My child is learning Somali in the classroom and he also has made a lot of change towards his behavior. I appreciate everything that you guys do in VOT."

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM PARENT
Spotlight on Early Learning Programs

Dual-Language Early Learning

VOT’s Early Learning Program teaches East African immigrant and refugee children so they speak their family languages, live securely in their identity and values, and are ready for kindergarten. VOT’s teachers speak our students’ languages and come from their cultures. We center dual-language learning because the ability to speak our languages unlocks the door to culture, family relationships, positive identity, and community belonging.

“I chose Voice of Tomorrow because children can learn two languages; the language they practice at home is supported in class. VOT provides them math and language assignments written in English and Somali. Because if the child knows two languages, it is a benefit to the child.”

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM PARENT

“The first difference between VOT and other preschools is that my children see other women that look like me and will talk to them like me.”

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM PARENT

Early Childhood Development

VOT screens all children for social-emotional, behavioral, and health concerns and developmental delays. We refer children who are flagged during screenings for follow-up and help families navigate the process of follow-up appointments and services. All screening and family education is provided in community languages, in a culturally responsive manner.

In 2022, we returned to in-person learning. The children in Early Learning have never known a world without COVID, and are affected by trauma and social-emotional delays. We launched new wrap-around supports and therapies for students with trauma and complex needs, called the ECLIPSE Program.
Home Visiting

The Mind, Body, and Culture (MBC) program integrates mental health and trauma-informed practices into our existing home visiting services with a focus on pregnant mothers, infants, and toddlers. Home visitors speak families’ languages and reflect their cultures. VOT expanded the program in 2022 to serve 60 families.

Jamilah Ali and her daughter are enrolled in MBC. Through the program, Jamilah has learned the importance of self-care and goals. She has learned to celebrate herself, appreciate her journey, and plan for tomorrow. Jamilah was able to visualize her goals with the home visitor and create a feasible plan to achieve them. Jamila is now enrolled in Highline College and plans to major in business to open her own store.

“MBC has helped me with improving my connection with my child through the Promoting First relationships lessons, The handouts and lessons have been useful to minimize disengagement and increase comfort with my child. I see the difference with my child’s interactions with me.”

MBC PARTICIPANT

“Thanks to this program for helping me with rental relief after my postpartum and assisting in with basic needs on a weekly basis. They have gone above and beyond for me with resources as a single mom. I appreciate their kindness and generosity.”

MBC PARTICIPANT
“In the back of your mind, you might think there will be too many challenges [to implement Early Learning]. In reality, what helps us overcome those challenges, and causes ease for us, are the people we talk to at Voices of Tomorrow. Whether it’s me or the families I serve, we are all so very happy with the way the children have someone who represents them, and speaks their language as their teacher.”

SABAH SAEED
Family Child Care Provider and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Program Contractor
Family Child Care Provider Support - By The Numbers

1,222 unique family child care providers served with trainings, resources, and technical assistance.

30,513 technical assistance encounters to support family child care providers.

1,200 Child Care Stabilization Grant applications submitted by providers via VOT technical assistance*.

20 family child care providers implemented ECEAP and Seattle Preschool Program under contact with VOT, serving 103 children.

68 trainings given with 2,305 providers attending (count may include duplicated attendees).

*Child Care Stabilization Grants help child care businesses stay open after a loss of income due to the pandemic.

Language Assistance Provided

Number of Providers Assisted

- Somali 250
- Spanish 206
- Others 61
- Arabic 19
- Oromo 16
- Amharic 12
- Swahili 3
- Tigrinya 2
Financials

**Income**
Total Income $9,314,866

- Foundation & Non-Profit Grant Income $1,216,375
- Fundraising $65,500
- Governmental Fund Income $8,032,991

**Expenditures**
Total Expenditures $7,928,543*

- Operating Costs $627,083
- Construction and Renovation Costs $7,031
- Direct Services to Children, Families, and Child Care Providers $7,294,428

*Net income is restricted funding for programming in future years.

**Funding Partners**
- Looking Out Foundation
- American Family Dream Foundation
- Walmart
- Boeing Puget Sound Chapter
- Enterprise Holding
- Bill Gates Foundation
- Liberty Mutual
- Multicare Health System
- UCC Legacy Foundation
- KH Consulting
- DCYF
- Seattle Foundation
- Devon Bank
- Tiny Tots Dev Center
- Deattle Foundation
- Stolte Foundation
- Horns of Africa
- Iraqi Community Center of WA
“I wish VOT had kindergarten and elementary school! I love it so much!”

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM PARENT
Voices of Tomorrow (VOT) is a community-based organization located in King County, Washington. We serve families and childcare providers in Washington’s immigrant and refugee community, with a primary focus on the East African community. Our mission is to preserve immigrant and refugee children’s identity through culturally responsive child-focused programs.

Get Involved! Follow Us:

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