



CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING TASK FORCE

MAY 28, 2024

Present: Allison Bishop, Anne Granberg, Beverly Porter, Chelsea Johnson, Christina Jackson, Colton Kaltenfeldt, Gregory Hansen, Jamie Desmul, Jennifer Wright, Katherine Orlowski, Karla Anderson, Jason Oldham, Jon Scanlon, Lyn Salazar, Megan Juenemann, Sallye Quinn, Samya Lutz, Sterling Chick, Tilda Doughy, Vesla Tonnessen

Not Present: Kayla Schott-Bresler, Kristi Dominguez, Monika Mahal, Samantha Cruz-Mendoza, Ray Deck, Sativa Robertson, Pamela Jons

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Welcome	<p>Introductions, land acknowledgment, housekeeping, and review of agreements.</p> <p><u>Land Acknowledgement:</u> I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are here today on the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples who have lived in the Salish Sea basin and the North Cascades watershed from time immemorial, in particular, the Lhaq'temish (LOCK-tuh-mish) people who we recognize today to be the Lummi Nation, the Nooksack Tribe, and Semiahmoo.</p> <p>May we be mindful of the inherent owners of this land, our children, who are our future. Our future stewards of the land and advocates for the generation to come. May that truth guide our work and efforts to improve the well-being of all families and children, native and non-native, living in this beautiful county.</p> <p>This land acknowledgment is not meant to be a substitute for authentic relationship-building and understanding. It is meant to introduce us to one way we can show respect and honor for the sacrifices of the first people of this land.</p> <p>Please join me in expressing the deepest respect for our indigenous neighbors, and gratitude for the enduring stewardship of our shared lands and waterways. https://www.lhaqtemish.org/ -Lhaq'temish Foundation</p> <p><u>Agreements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and self-care come first. • Be kind and gentle with yourself and others and assume everyone is coming from a positive place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Everyone has the best intentions. ○ Listen with an open mind and heart. • Be mindful of this space. Step-in and step-out/Step-up and step-back. Offer your truth and insights and listen to others' truths and insights. • Treat each other with honor and grace. We are all working under difficult circumstances. • Embrace diversity. Remember that we all come from different backgrounds giving us different perspectives and only when we embrace that diversity can we develop creative solutions to address the child and family well-being needs in Whatcom County. • What is said here stays here. • Have fun. <p>Fist to Five Consensus Tool – Amended 4.25.22</p>



<p>Approve Meeting Minutes</p>	<p>Minutes from April 22, 2024 were approved as presented.</p>
<p>Agenda Overview, Meeting Input/Evaluation</p>	<p>Evaluation tool: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf59ubhijlyXFZQJa0pXGgQQ5HhwJ1jamGFziQLXS6-zZC1hKQ/viewform</p> <p>The purpose of this Task Force was reviewed, as stated in the Ordinance. “The purpose of Whatcom County Child and Family Well-being Task Force is to continually review Whatcom governmental impact on children and family make recommendations for improvement for all departments.”</p>
<p>Community Shares and Shout outs</p>	<p>Jason Oldham announced the initiation of a new Fathers peer support group. This group will tentatively meet every Tuesday evening throughout the summer at Cornwall Park. More details will be provided in a flyer, which Jason plans to distribute to those who have expressed interest by the end of the week.</p> <p>Colton recommended an article in the Cascadia Daily that provides a balanced summary of the Healthy Children’s Fund. The article mentions some task force members and details the nuances, challenges, and opportunities they’ve been working with. https://www.cascadiadaily.com/2024/may/19/heres-where-initial-healthy-childrens-fund-dollars-are-going-serving-vulnerable-children/</p> <p>Colton shared about the “Inspire Breakfast Northwest” event organized by the Northwest Early Learning Alliance. The event, which is scheduled for the 30th from 8:30 to 10:00 AM, aims to foster discussions on strengthening the childcare network. Colton will attend and encouraged others to join if possible.</p>
<p>Governance and bylaws</p>	<p>Vesla discussed the ongoing work on creating governance documents for the task force to help refine how they work together and make decisions. This effort is in response to the task force’s growth over the past two years and the influx of new members.</p> <p>She initiated a process to revisit the task force’s values, which guide their decision-making, recommendations, and communication. The goal is to translate these values into principles for how they work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vesla introduced the use of Jamboard for members to note down what they believe should be the task force’s values. She guided the members on how to use the Jamboard and advised that the document would only be open for the duration of today’s meeting. <p>Vesla mentioned that they would revisit some of the meeting norms created previously to see if they are still applicable.</p> <p>Vesla acknowledged Tilda’s volunteering to help with the governance document.</p> <p>Allison reminded the Task Force that they deliver two reports to the County Council yearly: March 30th and September 30th.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upcoming report must be delivered to the council by September 30. It will need to be completed by September 13th to be included in the council's agenda packet for the September 24 Public Works & Finance Committee meeting. • The report must be approved at the August 26 task force meeting to meet the deadline. The task force will not meet in July, but work can continue. • Unlike the spring report, which focused on the progress of the Healthy Children's Fund, the upcoming report will cover other work of the task force. • A small group will draft the report and then give everyone a week or so for feedback before voting on it at the August meeting. • A follow-up email will be sent to gather a group to draft the report.
<p>Healthy Children's Fund Update</p>	<p>Sarah provided an update on the Healthy Children's Fund and discussed the format for an ongoing written report requested by the task force.</p> <p>Last month, the team applied to Stanford's RAPID survey, which collects rapid feedback from families and parents. They have been invited to interview in the second phase of the application process.</p> <p>The basic needs RFP closed with four applicants totaling \$1.3 million in proposals. A team will soon review these proposals. The behavioral and mental health RFP opened on May 16th and closes on June 11th. The drop-in care RFP for childcare opened on May 21st and closes on June 25th.</p> <p>The team met with the Healthy Children's Fund subcommittee of the task force to review the first iteration of the subsidy plan. They received initial feedback and planned a 3-hour affordability summit in partnership with the Childcare Coalition. The team is reevaluating the subsidy recommendations based on input and plans to gather more community and parent feedback.</p> <p>Interviews are being conducted this week for a full-time evaluator position. The final part of the Healthy Children's Fund staff will start on June 10th.</p> <p>Task force members were invited to ask questions about the updates. Samya Lutz expressed appreciation for the summary.</p>
<p>Healthy Children's Fund: Reporting: format, structure, content and timing</p>	<p>Sarah shared a draft report to update on the Healthy Children's Fund monthly. The report is intended to track progress and provide information for evaluating and understanding progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah invited feedback on the draft report, particularly on the topic areas. She emphasized that the report was built based on her capacity to provide information regularly. • The report will include a narrative, staffing updates, evaluation updates, outreach and communication updates, budget updates, and funding solicitation status. • The Healthy Children's Fund budget is divided into three categories: early learning and care, support for vulnerable children, and administrative. The report will include details on the fund balance, money awarded, contracted, spent, budgeted, and the percentage of the fund.





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She mentioned that there is a delay in the administrative services at the county level in terms of tracking the budget. Both she and the Budget office track the budget spent, but there is a lag in the Budget office's tracking. Typically, the Budget office's spent number is used for recording purposes. This is an important factor to consider when dealing with the budget portion of the report. • The report will include a section on the funding solicitation status to keep everyone updated on the current funding mechanisms, their connection to the implementation team's strategy, and their status in terms of drafting, finance review, legal review, publishing, selection, awarding, and contracting. • Sarah invited suggestions from the group on additional topics to be covered in the report or changes in its structure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Samya asked if we could also have a way to hear about the subcommittees and how their work feeds into this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sarah agreed but noted that not all subcommittees are solely dedicated to the Healthy Children's Fund. She suggested having a separate section for subcommittee updates and how they connect to the fund. ○ Colton asked about the distribution of the report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sarah confirmed that the report would be emailed to task force members beforehand and discussed during meetings. ○ Tilda shared that she was among the first to suggest the report based on their parent Policy Council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For Head Start and ECEAP, the Assistant Directors compile a monthly report to send to the parents and the Policy Council as part of their meeting packet. ▪ This report is discussed and included in the meeting notes as a record. The consistent format of these reports is helpful for people to follow along and review each month. ○ Christina asked if it would be possible to include the department's numbers regarding the budget as a placeholder while waiting for the official numbers from Finance. ○ Sarah and Ann agreed that they could use the numbers from the department's tracking as a placeholder ○ Vesla suggested getting updates from other departments involved in the Healthy Children's Fund. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ann suggested creating a specific template for these departments to ensure the information aligns with the task force's needs. ○ Tilda offered to share the template used for the Policy Council, which she said helps follow and maintain a consistent format. • Sarah emphasized that the report is iterative and can be adjusted based on feedback and needs. She welcomed further suggestions and feedback from the task force members.
<p>Healthy Children's Fund Evaluation Plan</p>	<p>Erin Larsen-Cooper from Village Reach provided an update on the progress made towards the evaluation plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She introduced herself and Village Reach, a global public health nonprofit that provides advice, consulting services, and other technical assistance to local health departments across the state.



- She clarified that they are not the evaluators but are preparing the evaluation plan for the Healthy Children's Fund.
- There is an evaluation advisory group of about 15 members, including Health Department staff, task force members, and other community stakeholders.
 - She shared that they have been soliciting regular feedback and have met three times so far.
- Erin discussed the importance of understanding the intervention for creating a good evaluation plan.
- They will soon solicit feedback from recipients and potential recipients of funds on reporting requirements.
 - Discussed the possibility of getting community feedback from community members rather than community stakeholders.
- She gave a sneak peek of some of their work to date, including creating a theory of change for the Healthy Children's Fund.
 - She discussed the assumptions behind the theory of change and how it becomes the basis for the evaluation.
- The first draft of the evaluation plan should be ready by June 7.
- Erin invited everyone to a feedback meeting on June 5th at 2:30 PM.
- She reiterated that the evaluation will focus on how the implementation is going and whether there are any early warning signs or early positive signs that they are headed in the right direction.
- Erin continued her presentation, discussing the approaches leading to the focus areas of the Healthy Children's Fund. These approaches were aligned with ace preventative factors based on feedback from staff and the evaluation advisory group.
- She discussed the benefits they hope to see in the community based on the Healthy Children's Fund, including families having access to mental and behavioral health programs and resources, more parenting services, programs and resources available, and more families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness receiving housing services and resources.
- She explained the theory of change for the Healthy Children's Fund and the importance of evaluating the client and the whole population.
- She discussed the challenges of measuring effects on the client population with existing data sources and the need for additional resources.
- Erin emphasized the need to ensure improved outcomes for those directly worked with before expecting an impact across the whole population.
- She discussed the potential for significant changes or barriers outside their control to impact the desired outcome more than the intervention itself.
- She concluded her presentation by inviting everyone to a meeting in June to dive deeper into these topics and provide feedback.
- Erin asked if there were any questions.
 - Samya Lutz thanked Erin for the presentation and asked about the flexibility of the intermediate outcomes and impacts.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Erin responded that while nothing is finalized, she would be concerned if feedback suggested they were entirely off the mark. She welcomed feedback on specific indicators that might not seem right or missing. ○ Samya Lutz mentioned the context of these subjects and the history of work in the community. She expressed her focus on housing and the curve they looked at turning around the cost burden. She didn't see anything reflecting that in the current presentation and wondered if it was too sub-category to be included. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Erin explained that they are looking at indicators of stable housing for people receiving housing services funded by the Healthy Children's Fund. She discussed the balance of being ambitious with the fund's impact and being realistic about the fund's resources versus the significance of the housing problem in the county. She confirmed that nothing is set in stone, and there's still time to negotiate whether they've gotten the balance correct. ○ Colton asked if the PowerPoint presentation would be available for them to review later. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Erin confirmed that she could send the slides she showed. ○ Second, Colton asked about the organization's role and the difference between the performance evaluation and the ordinance-required independent auditor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Erin answered that the evaluation plan should be a guiding document for measuring what needs to be measured and how to approach it. She mentioned that the evaluation plan will include many elements required for the audit. She also mentioned that once the evaluation plan is complete, they can check if it meets the audit requirements. If not, an additional process for the audit could come on board outside of the evaluation plan.
<p>Public comment</p>	<p>Colton opened the public comment period. Sarah confirmed the presence of the public both online and in person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community member asked about the difference between how the ARPA funds are being spent and the Healthy Children Funds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allison clarified that the public comment period is for comments, not necessarily questions. • Council member Jon Scanlon thanked everyone for the recent reports from the task force and expressed interest in hearing from the task force again. He suggested possible meeting times and offered to send a schedule. • Tilda suggested that the public comment could be that there is a need for more explanation of ARPA vs. HCF funds. Sarah agreed to take this as a public comment. • Beverly suggested declaring at every meeting that questions and comments from the public can't be responded to directly during the meeting. • Mayor Greg Hansen agreed with Beverly's suggestion and added that it's common in meetings to take public comment without back-and-forth replies. He also suggested having people state their name and address or at least a name organization to identify themselves for the public record. • Greg also shared that the information about the breakdown between ARPA and HCF is on the WCHD website - https://www.whatcomcounty.us/civicalerts.aspx?aid=4411



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colton thanked the public for their comments and said he would chat with the team to see how they could respond to public comments later. • Vesla Tonnessen suggested incorporating the handling of public comments into the bylaws. • Mayor Greg Hansen suggested taking the public’s name and contact information and responding to their request for information later. • Colton agreed with Mayor Greg Hansen’s suggestion and said they would return with a better approach at the next meeting.
Closing	The meeting adjourned at 4:52 pm.
Next Meeting	Next regular meeting: June 24, 2024 <u>Location: Hybrid</u>



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Progress toward the
evaluation plan

May 2024

VillageReach

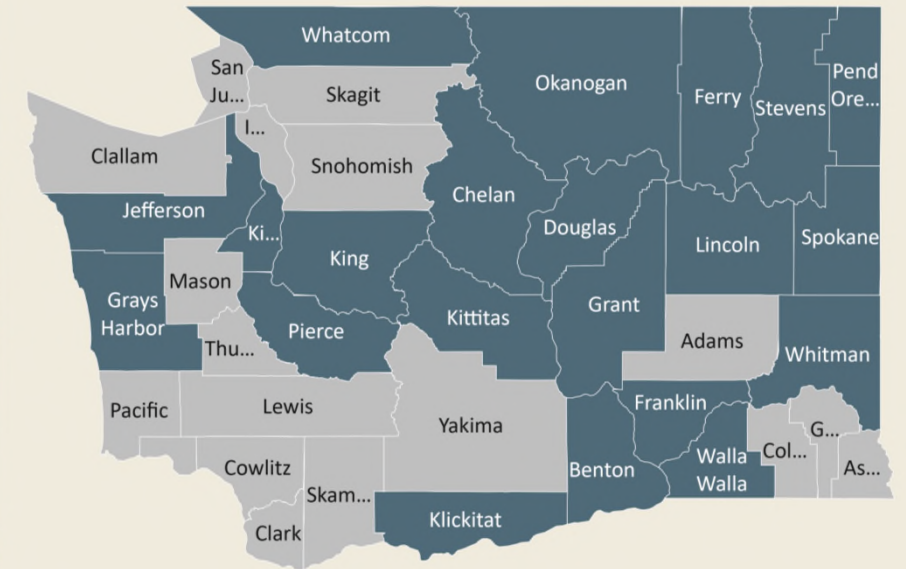
is a global public health non-profit.

What We Do

In Washington State, we provide technical assistance to local health jurisdictions to improve health equity and meet community needs.



Where We've Worked



Areas of Expertise



Evaluations & Assessments



Data Analytics & Dashboards



Community Engagement



Strategic Planning



Data Modernization



Career Development



Equity-driven Program Design

Progress to date:

1. Solicited regular feedback:
 1. Formed Evaluation Advisory Group of ~15 members including health department staff, taskforce members and other community stakeholders
 2. Met with HCF staff and other health dept staff, including 2-day in person visit
 3. **Happening soon: solicit feedback from recipients and potential recipients of funds on reporting requirements**
 4. Re-looking at community feedback mechanisms
2. Establishing framework and principles for evaluation:
 1. Created theory of change
 2. Adapted principles from results-based accountability
 3. Adapted principles from *The Goldilocks Challenge: Right-Fit Evidence for the Social Sector*
3. Drafting the evaluation plan:
 1. First draft by June 7th!

We want your feedback!
Join us on June 5th at 2:30pm



Theory of Change: Early Learning & Care (ELC) Portion

Assumptions

- Kids enrolled in ELC have higher levels of Kindergarten readiness
- ELC – along with behavioral & mental health and family support programs – helps reduce rates of child abuse and neglect
- There is high demand for ELC. But available options for ELC do not always meet families' needs
- More culturally responsive and high quality ELC options will increase demand and improve equity
- One of the most significant barriers to participation is that ELC is not available, affordable or accessible enough
- A significant barrier to making ELC more available is lack of a consistent workforce.

Equity

Approaches:

1. Provide funds for small capital projects to expand, renovate or repurpose buildings to be used for ELC
2. Coordinate current and develop additional pathways to ensure a stable ELC workforce to deliver high-quality programs for children
3. Improve access to ELC through subsidies that reduce the cost of programs for children from families which are cost-burdened.
4. Ensure access to ELC by promoting the expansion and retention of the ELC workforce.
5. Create regional early learning & care hubs that include shared administrative services, co-located early learning and other services for children and families, and support for smaller providers in the County
6. Support innovative approaches to meet various HCF goals related to ELC

Intermediate Outcomes:

- Increased ELC sites & slots available, especially rural areas
- Increased access to mental and behavioral supports within ELC programs
- More flexible ELC options are available, such as “drop-in” sites
- ELC sites receive resources to effectively serve children with disabilities
- Parents know how to find ELC options that meet their needs

- More families have access to meaningful ELC subsidies or resources that make ELC more affordable

- ELC educators access professional development & continuing education opportunities
- Increased availability of shared resources for ELC sites, through regional hub
- Families have positive & culturally responsive experiences w/ ELC

- Increased number of ELC educators are credentialed
- Increased number ELC educators enter the field
- Competitive earnings and benefits packages for ELC educators

Early learning & care is **accessible**

Early learning & care is **affordable**

Early learning and care is **high-quality & culturally responsive**

Early learning & care providers can attract & retain a **high-quality workforce**

Long-Term Outcomes:

More families **utilize** ELC opportunities, especially from communities of focus

Impact:

- Increase in the percentage of Whatcom kids that enter Kindergarten ready to learn & a decrease in disparities
- Decrease in the rates of child abuse and neglect in Whatcom County

Theory of Change: Supporting Vulnerable Children (SVC) Portion

Assumptions

- In order to achieve early childhood wellbeing families need to have their basic needs met, including housing
- Mental and behavioral health (MBH) services and family support programs help reduce rates of child abuse and neglect
- There is high need for MBH services and family support programs but numerous barriers to accessing care, including stigma, availability, accessibility and affordability of services
- Available options for MBH services and family support programs don't always meet families' needs; more integrated, culturally responsive and high-quality options will increase demand and improve equity
- A significant barrier to making MBH services more available is lack of a consistent workforce

Equity

Approaches:

7. Recruit Mental & Behavioral Health Workforce to Whatcom County
8. Develop and/or expand resources and programs for families who disproportionately experience housing instability.
9. Increase support and services for pregnant and parenting families, particularly those with vulnerable children
10. Integrate and co-locate services via coordinated access to resource navigation

Intermediate Outcomes:

- More wrap-around services and mental and behavior health services located at convenient locations
- Increased number of mental health providers, especially those specializing in perinatal health, young children and parenting
- Families and children have positive and culturally responsive experiences with mental and behavior services

- More parenting services, programs and resources available

- More families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness receive housing resources and are connected to other supportive services

Families have access to **MBH programs resources and services**

Expecting parents and parents have **strong support networks**

Families have access to **basic needs** including food, parenting supplies and health services

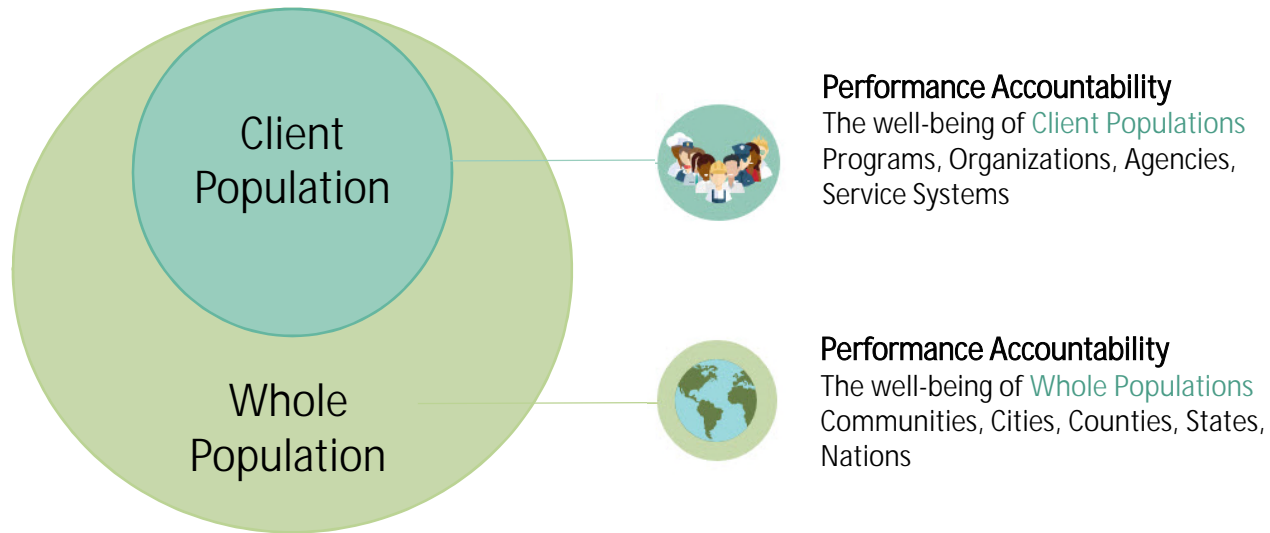
Families have access to **safe, stable housing**

Impact:

- Increase in the percentage of Whatcom kids that enter Kindergarten ready to learn & a decrease in disparities
- Decrease in the rates of child abuse and neglect in Whatcom County

Using Results Based Accountability

Program or performance evaluation: A systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using data to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and, as importantly, to contribute to continuous program improvement (CDC)



Key Points:



Effects on the client population is the most direct way to measure effectiveness



Effects on the client population can be hard to measure with existing data sources

Example:

HCF provides housing resources:



Client population:

Did the people receiving services funded by HCF have more stable housing afterwards?



Whole population:

Did homeless across the entire county go down?

You'll only see a difference in population accountability when:

- You've improved outcomes for those you're working with directly (client level)
- You have sufficient scale to impact the entire county
- There are not significant changes or barriers out of your control that impact the desired outcome more than your intervention