



CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING TASK FORCE

AUGUST 26, 2024

Present: Allison Bishop, Anne Granberg, Beverly Porter, Allison Williams, Christina Jackson, Colton Kaltenfeldt, Jen Wright, Karla Anderson, Jason Oldham, Lynn Salazar, Megan Juenemann, Monika Mahal, Sallye Quinn, Samya Lutz, Vesla Tonnesson, Jed Holmes

Not Present: Greg Hansen, Jamie Desmul, Katherine Orlowski, Kristi Dominguez, Jon Scanlon, Samantha Cruz Mendoza, Pamela Jons, Ray Deck, Sativa Robertson, Sterling Chick, Tilda Doughty.

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Welcome	<p>Introductions, land acknowledgment, housekeeping, and review of agreements.</p> <p><u>Land Acknowledgement:</u></p> <p>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>



Approve Meeting Minutes	Minutes from June 24, 2024, were approved as presented.
Agenda Overview, Meeting Input/Evaluation	<p>Evaluation tool: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf59ubhjlyXFZQJa0pXGgQQ5HhwJ1jamGFzjQLXS6-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>
Community Shares and Shout outs	Jason reminded everyone of Whatcom Thriving Fathers that is meeting at Cornwall Park's Frisbee golf course.
Review of July follow-up discussion with Council	<p>Sallye reported on the task force's presentation to the council, which she attended along with Ray, Vesla, and Colton. The presentation was a follow-up to the initial presentation and was based on the task force's report card.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation highlighted the significantly improved communication from the Health Department on their work. The Health Department was present during the presentation and was able to provide information when questions arose. • Sallye and Vesla presented additional information to the council, including the need for the Executive Office to work on how administration funds from the levy can be used to advance programming. • Vesla emphasized the need to improve community access and the process for responding to requests for proposals, noting that currently, one must physically walk in a presentation to apply or respond to a request for proposal. • Sallye shared that the Council appreciated the presentation and the task force's diligent oversight of the funds. They also responded to specific questions from the council about the levy. • Sarah expressed her appreciation for the presentation and the opportunity to follow up with the council.
September Report to Council	<p>Colton present the September report to Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two reports are required annually: Healthy Children's Fund Update and an annual report covering non-Healthy Children's Fund work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Healthy Children's Fund Update was presented a few months ago • The September report includes comprehensive plan recommendations and updates on governance structures. Colton shared an overview of the report and the changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comprehensive plan recommendations serve as a framework for the work undertaken. ○ New subcommittees have been established to structure the work. ○ Ongoing bylaws work and efforts to streamline advisory groups under a unified charter. ○ Areas in red indicate cuts from the previous version; bright green indicates additions. ○ Land acknowledgment adapted from meeting minutes. ○ Introduction expanded to highlight contributions and restructuring efforts. ○ Specific call-out for local government coordination in comprehensive plan recommendations.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress and Accountability subcommittee working on a tracking document for recommendations to the Council. ● Beverly suggested adding “and leadership” to the land acknowledgment to honor native peoples’ leadership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Megan proposed a strategic review of the land acknowledgment, referencing the Lhaq’temish Foundation’s example. Lhaq’temish Land Acknowledgement. ○ Jennifer Wright supported revisiting the land acknowledgment and suggested Megan lead the revision effort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current iteration of the land acknowledgment to remain in the report for now. ● Sallye raised a concern about the use of the comprehensive plan recommendations as the guiding template for the task force’s work, suggesting it might be more appropriate as a template for the Non-Healthy Children’s Fund work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Colton clarified that the original idea was to use the comprehensive plan recommendations as a template for the report, but agreed there could be confusion. He agreed to revise the wording to make it more distinct. ○ Sallye suggested that the recommendations serve as an effective framework for the type of non-HCF work the task force has engaged in, and that these recommendations should be used as a summary of their work in the report. ○ Colton agreed to make the changes and asked if anyone else had any concerns. No other concerns were raised. ● Colton moved to adopt the September 2024 report to council with the noted changes. Sallye seconded the motion, and it was approved by the task force. ● The task force discussed the possibility of presenting the report to the council. It was confirmed that they would be on the agenda of the Public Works and Health Committee on September 24th. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They discussed the possibility of other members presenting the report to grow their leadership capacity. Ally, Megan, and Lynn expressed interest. ○ Colton moved to designate the co-chairs plus Ally, Megan, and Lynn to be on the docket for presenting the report. The motion was approved by the group.
<p>Healthy Children’s Fund Update</p>	<p>Sarah provided an update on the Healthy Children’s fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applied and accepted for a system mapping grant with Start Early. \$85,000 in-kind contribution for early learning and care systems map. Expected completion by January. ● Accepted to the P-3 Institute at the University of Colorado. Team of 8, including 3 superintendents, to attend in October. Focus on supporting childcare centers and preschool programs. ● The Innovation Services Fund launched on August 14th with \$1.5 million for innovation projects. The RFP will be open for 10 weeks with webinars for approvals. ● Several contracts have been approved by council including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$800,000 for Bellingham Food Bank, ○ \$200,000 for Doula services



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allison shared that access to Doula services launched last week and they have received 8 referrals in less than a week. ▪ Information on referrals can be found here. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$150,000 for perinatal mental health. • The Healthy Children’s Fund subcommittee most recent meeting took place on August 19th. They discussed updates on the childcare subsidy, parent care giver survey and RFP process improvement. • Hunter Pluckebaum has been appointed as the full-time Healthy Children’s Fund evaluator. • Chelsea Johnson has left her position and Alison Williams has been appointed as the Health Department designee for the task force. • The final evaluation plan has been submitted by Village Reach • We were officially accepted for the Rapid Survey by Stanford Center for Early Learning. • Washington State Department of Health is conducting a child wellness survey with oversampling in Whatcom County • A contract has been signed with Bellingham PR for communications support. • Recently presented to the Bellingham City Council and the Chamber of Commerce.
<p>Workgroup updates</p>	<p>Sarah shared an update on the Issues and Policy Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the last meeting they discussed direct cash transfer programs and what that would look like in Whatcom County • Aly Robinson did a presentation on school-based health centers and how that might interact with early learning and parents <p>Colton shared an update on the Accountability subcommittee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their first meeting was held on July 2nd where they discussed the subcommittee’s purpose and initial tasks • They have developed a recommendation tracker to monitor the status of recommendations made to County Council • Colton requested more volunteers to help with the tracker <p>Vesla shared an update on the Health Children’s Fund subcommittee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group has been discussing the childcare subsidy survey and outreach • They have been reviewing the RFP process and ways to improve accessibility
<p>County presentation on community engagement</p>	<p>Jed Holmes introduced himself, mentioning his role in the executive office and his involvement in communications and community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kayla Schott-Bresler took over as the strategic initiatives manager and later moved to the deputy executive role <p>Jed Holmes discussed the different types of community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement driven by specific departments like Health and Community Services • Engagement through advisory boards and task forces



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement for specific projects, such as ARPA funds allocation for childcare and the criminal justice project <p>Jed Holmes gave examples of county's community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Department's programmatic communications (e.g., vaccination clinics). Project-based outreach like the criminal justice project and comprehensive plan update. Public participation through events like the Stommish Water Festival and Ferndale Food Truck Friday.
<p>Discussion on Task Force communication & engagement with the public</p>	<p>Colton inquired about upcoming projects to promote the Healthy Children's Fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah Simpson highlighted efforts to connect with Whatcom Talk and hiring Bellingham PR for better communication. <p>Vesla Tonnessen opened a discussion on how the task force can support and improve community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sallye Quinn suggested organizing listening sessions to gather feedback from community members. Beverly Porter emphasized the importance of involving parents and community members in these sessions. <p>Hari Chon introduced herself and discussed the Women's Bureau's focus on childcare as a workforce barrier.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentioned plans to organize a listening session in early September to discuss federal construction projects and support for workers through childcare. <p>Jennifer proposed drafting a new land acknowledgement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on whether a vote is needed or if interested members can draft and present it in the next meeting. Vesla Tonnessen suggested that a month might be too quick, especially in August, but agreed it should be revisited along with governance documents. <p>Vesla proposed adding the topic of listening sessions to the next agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sallye and Beverly discussed planning and conducting listening sessions to gather community feedback. They emphasized ensuring consistency across communities and potentially collaborating with Health and Community Services for evaluation. <p>Vesla suggested dedicating more time to review and update governance documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for members to explore specific aspects of governance for discussion in the next session.
<p>Public Comment</p>	
<p>Closing</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 5:01 pm.</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>Next regular meeting: September 23, 2024 Location: Hybrid</p>



NO-COST DOULA SERVICES



Who is eligible?

Funded By The Healthy Children's Fund, free birth and postpartum doula services are now available to Medicaid-eligible families in Whatcom County. Benefits of doula care include increased knowledge and confidence about birth and parenting, reduced likelihood of low birth weight and premature birth, an increased system of support for navigating health care and social services, and improved maternal health outcomes. Eligible and interested families should talk to their doctor or midwife for a referral.

What is a doula?

A doula is a trained, non-clinical worker who provides emotional, physical, and informational support for pregnant people before, during, and after labor and in the early months of parenting. Doulas share useful information on what to expect during pregnancy, labor, and delivery and can help families plan for the birth experience they hope for.

How does the program work?

Clients can get free birth doula services which include:

- Up to 3 visits before birth
- Help during labor and delivery
- 2 visits after birth.
- They can also choose up to 16 hours of support after the baby is born.

To qualify, clients must be referred to the program by a provider and be eligible for Medicaid, Apple Health, or WIC.

Refer a client


Any Medicaid-eligible family would be appropriate, especially families experiencing challenging social-economic circumstances. To refer a client, providers can scan the QR code below or visit (link) to fill out an intake/referral form. Referral forms must be faxed to 360-778-6004. A referrals coordinator will follow up with the client within 5 days of receipt of the referral to connect them with a doula.



Questions?

Email HCFdoula@co.whatcom.wa.us

Made possible through funding from

 **Whatcom Healthy
Children's Fund**
www.healthychildrensfund.org





Whatcom Thriving Fathers

Activities each Tuesday
June-August!

Meet at Cornwall Park's
Frisbee golf course "hole 1"
6-8 pm

- Frisbee golf
- Hiking
- BBQ's and more!

WTF is a peer-
support community
for fathers to share
the joys and
challenges of raising
small humans!



Questions? Please contact us at
WhatcomThrivingFathers@gmail.com



A place for
ALL
Fathers!

