

Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group (CYBHWG)  
**Prenatal through Five Relational Health Subgroup (P5RHS)**  
*November 29, 2023 Meeting Notes*

**Glossary of Terms**

- CYBHWG: Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group
- DCYF: WA State Department of Children, Youth & Families
- ECEAP: Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
- HCA: Washington State Health Care Authority
- IECMH-C: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- MHC: Mental Health Consultants
- WCCC: Working Connections Childcare

**Meeting Topics**

- Review P5RHS' 2024 recommendations
- Hear comments from elected officials on key P5RHS issues
- Hear from a panel of parents and providers on Early ECEAP
- Hear from MHC providers and partners on IECMH-C
- Hear a conversation with a family home provider

**P5RH recommendations advanced by CYBHWG:**

Recommendation	Description
<p>Expansion of the Early ECEAP (birth to three ECEAP) program  <i>ECEAP (pronounced "e-cap") = Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program</i></p>	<p>P5RH recommends the legislature expand Early ECEAP program slots and change policy to allow continued eligibility for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) in Early ECEAP.</p> <p>Invest an additional \$9.6M to meet the existing demand for additional Early ECEAP slots            Invest \$2.226M for SFY25 per the DCYF Decision Package to allow continued eligibility for WCCC in ECEAP and HeadStart programs</p>
<p>Increase Investment in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMH-C) (Holding Hope)</p>	<p>Increase investment in Infant and early Childhood Mental Health consultants (IECMH-C) by \$1.75 million annually to address unmet need and increase equitable access to IECMH-C for WA's children, families, and adult caregivers in childcare. Funds would be used to:            Expand capacity to provide individualized mental health consultation services to more providers;</p>

Provide IECMH-C services by linguistically and culturally matched consultants; and Address ongoing program needs to maintain quality and increase access.

## Discussion Summary

1. Comments were provided by the following elected officials:
  - a. Rep. Debra Entenman (D), 47<sup>th</sup> Legislative District
  - b. Sen. Andy Billig (D), 3<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District
  - c. Rep. Lisa Callan (D), 5<sup>th</sup> Legislative District
  - d. Sen. Claire Wilson (D), 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District
  - e. Sen. Judy Warnick (R), 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District
  - f. Rep. Tana Senn (D), 41<sup>st</sup> Legislative District
2. Early ECEAP Panel
  - a. Currently, WA State has 178 slots for Early ECEAP serving the highest needs children 0-3.
    - i. It is a center-based program with a childcare partnership program – executing high-quality, full-day, full-year childcare; as well as wraparound family support.
  - b. Early ECEAP providers would like to serve 400+ additional children. Meeting that demand would cost an additional \$9.6 million.
    - i. This investment is scalable – the number of slots can be paired with what’s available in the budget.
  - c. Policy change
    - i. The end goal is to have stability of care for children and families for a year; and stability of payment for providers so they can maintain that slot and care.
    - ii. This policy change is consistent with DCYF’s decision package.
  - d. Parents and providers shared experiential testimonies about the impact of Early ECEAP on their + their patients/families’ lives.
    - i. Stories emphasized the importance and impact of having trusted, culturally responsible supports for not only the children but the whole family.
3. IECMH-C Panel
  - a. IECMH-C is a legacy item for P5RHS, meaning the subgroup has spent many years working on IECMH consultation.
  - b. For the purpose of this recommendation, we are referring to a specific, statewide program, “Holding Hope”, which matches MHCs who have a background and expertise in infant and early childhood mental and relational health with licensed childcare providers who are experiencing challenging behaviors in their program.
  - c. IECMH-C is based on an evidence-based, federal prevention model that is shown to reduce suspension and expulsion rates of the youngest learners in childcare settings.
    - i. Suspension and expulsion rates disproportionately impact children of color, particular young, black boys, children with disabilities, and dual language learning families.

- ii. 9/15 of the MHCs identify as black, indigenous or people of color, and fluently speak six languages in addition to English.
  - d. Last year, Sen. Warnick presented an amendment in the Ways and Means Committee that led to IECMH-C funding this biennium. The current request is to go back and see the additional funding not received last year.
  - e. The 15 consultants are geographically spread all over the state but are working as a whole to partner with each other across regions and support diverse needs.
    - i. These 15 consultants serve about 2% of the licensed childcare providers in the state. The goal is to serve roughly 10% of licensed childcare providers (of which there are about 5500) at any given point in time.
    - ii. A survey administered last year reported that 60-70% of child care providers are reporting an increase in behavioral and mental health needs.
  - f. MHC consultants and providers shared experiential testimonies of the every day, multi-level impacts of IECMH consultants.
- 4. A conversation with Diego Ramos, family home provider
  - a. Serving children birth to age seven with culturally and linguistically matched + responsive care.
  - b. Working with children in families who utilize childcare subsidy
  - c. Running a bilingual dual language learning curriculum and program, primarily serving bilingual and/or immigrant families.
  - d. Helping children and their families navigate through getting into childcare and learning about all the services available to them.
    - i. Bilingual children often struggle with connection, social relationships, and literacy which is why socioemotional supports are so important to their growth.
- 5. Timeline and Next steps
  - a. 12/14 P5RH Subgroup Meeting