



## Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group (CYBHWG)

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June 18, 2025

[Watch on TVW](#)

### Top of Mind Issues for 2026 Legislative Session and August Optional Meeting Focus

*See TVW recording (39:05)*

#### 2026 Legislative Session

- The main objectives for the 2026 legislative session are:
  - To identify issues to develop legislation for, and in coordination with the WA Thriving Strategic Plan.
  - Protect legacy items that have a decrease in, or an elimination of, funding.
  - Explore any topics that may need to be developed further that are not included within WA Thriving or are not coming up in the subgroups.
  - Review of emergent issues and the topics members brought forward from the survey distributed during the meeting.
- With the current funding constraints this year, it will be important to find ways to fund the work to move it forward.
- Statements of support will be looked at to see how they align with the WA Thriving Strategic Plan to lend a voice of support to those items.

#### August Meeting Focus

##### Topics Suggested

- Funding limitations for 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline with the defunding of subnetwork LGBTQI+ lifeline as of July 17th.
- SUD and MOUD treatments
- Child fatalities and near fatalities; fentanyl response/services for families, providers, and for courts.
- The ability to treat, support, and coach families without putting a diagnostic label on them.
- Helping our families deal with issues in early childhood and supporting healthy emotional development.
- Homeless prevention diversion fund, flexible funding, one-time for energy shelters and housing vouchers.
- Referral services and how to keep them well-staffed and supported.
- Early intervention services.
- Real support for individuals with significant mental illness and making sure they are getting the care needed and not ending up incarcerated.



- Look at past workgroup priorities to see if those are still priorities or not, how implementation is going, and if we can do more.
- Substance use disorder and mental health treatment for parents and families and what we are doing to prevent or treat.
- Better access to SUD inpatient treatment where parents can take their babies and young children or older children (e.g., Rising Strong).

## Washington Thriving Updates

*See TVW recording (59:30)*

### Highlights

- Chris Soderquist is working on turning the systems map into an interactive tool that gives people some ability to adjust scenarios where the state might develop system investments and then use the tool to try to see how the recommendations may play out in terms of the positive impact on the continuum of care.
- Some key takeaways for the work include:
  - Validating and reinforcing things that the group has identified in other areas of the Washington thriving process regarding areas where there might be big opportunities and levers for change
  - Recognition that the WA Thriving data isn't specific enough to the state's context yet for it to be a strong predictor of those system map levers, but progress is being made and it's a useful conversation piece.
- Behavioral Health Catalyst used some philanthropic dollars to secure some strategic expertise from a small consulting communications expert firm Minerva, to take the vast amounts of information that is part of the Strategic Plan and offer ideas to inform the team on ways to present the Strategic Plan that is compelling and digestible, for both the November legislative report and beyond to reach additional audiences.
- The Washington Thriving team has launched a survey series to gather feedback on the emerging recommendations and to inform the narrative of the Strategic Plan.
  - The team is asking people to support both by filling that out and distributing the survey across our state.
  - Click link for [survey access](#) and for questions contact: [info@washingtonthriving.org](mailto:info@washingtonthriving.org)

### Additional Resources

- [About WA Thriving](#)
- [WA Thriving Events](#)

## Washington Thriving Emerging Recommendation 1F

Washington Thriving Emerging Recommendation 1F: *Invest in community based behavioral health and wellness education, promotion, and preventative solutions*

*See TVW recording (1:06:00)*

### Highlights

**What would it take to implement these recommendations?**



- We want to continue to build on existing upstream policies and efforts such as community health worker expansion, early childhood policies, family resource centers, etc.
- What does “self-reinforcing” mean (this is how the recommendation was framed in the slide deck)? This is a large recommendation; therefore, we need to continue to clarify and refine what it is.
- This topic is so big and so important, can we spend the August meeting focusing on it?
- Hard to talk about prevention when we don’t have fully funded treatment centers. How do we balance this?

### **What existing examples should be highlighted?**

- Critical importance of having structures in place so families can address a need as soon as it arises, and having a diverse array of supports like navigation, etc. to support them in the process.

### **Ideas and comments for emerging recommendation 1F**

- Be mindful to not have too many assessments.
- Don’t create additional administrative Burdens.
- How can you standardize intake throughout the state/Medicaid.
- Training for staff around inclusion, equity and diversity that is reinforced and implemented.
- Where are the areas that youth/families are? How can we leverage those areas?
- How to share knowledge across sectors?
- Look at a family as a system and not focused on identifying someone.
- Look at having wraparound for families.
- Services provided need to be responsive to the families’ needs.

## **Washington Thriving Emerging Recommendation 3B**

Washington Thriving Emerging Recommendation 3B: *Operationalize strengths-based, healing-centered, culturally-responsive intake and assessment practices*

See TVW recording (1:28:30)

### **Highlights**

#### **What would it take to implement these recommendations?**

- We need to understand the landscape of partners that these approaches could be implemented through. While we’ve done a lot of work to assess landscape, etc., we want to come back to that and make sure we’re building on connections and efficiencies.
- We need shared language and framework around how to take a strengths-based approach to our collective work with families (i.e., Strengthening Families Protective Factor framework, etc.)
- We’re fully aligned with the vision and intent of this recommendation, and we would love to see it simplified and clarified.

#### **Survey Request**

- [Share your feedback on recommendations 1F and 3B](#)



## Chat Resources

- [Mental health assessment for young children](#)
- [Friendship Bench](#)
- [Strong Minds](#)

## Public comment

*See TVW recording (1:46:50)*

- I would like to see more spaces for youth ages 25 and under because sometimes when people, especially men, turn 18 they are put in the general population of prison or of a MH institution, and sometimes those spaces work, but it would be developmentally appropriate and safer for youth if they had spaces for their situation.