

Birth to Three Plan Status Update

Washington Early Learning Partnership Retreat

Introduction

This update highlights key efforts to implement the [Washington State Birth to 3 Plan](#), describes opportunities and efforts that have emerged since the plan was developed in 2010 and provides several preliminary recommendations and questions for the Washington Early Learning Partnership to consider.

Snapshot of Current Key Activities

Ready and Successful Children

Health and Developmental Wellbeing

- **Developmental Screening:** As of August 1, 2014, Health Care Authority (HCA) Medicaid began allowing reimbursement for primary care providers to provide one developmental screen for all children age 9-30 months and additional authorizations for children suspected of having autism. This is the first time WA Medicaid has covered screenings, however, one screening is below the nationally recommend schedule for preventive well child care. Developmental screening is also a quality measure for the managed care organizations (MCO), and they are providing their health care providers with best practice information on developmental screening.
- **Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant:** DOH received a HRSA ECCS grant (2013-2016) to focus on using a Collective Impact approach with multiple partners to plan and build a statewide system to support Universal Developmental Screening and linkages to supportive services for children. Action Teams are currently refining strategies and measures. A business case for a shared data system has been drafted and will be refined over the next few months, including cost estimates of implementation.
- **Help Me Grow:** Washington is now an affiliate state of Help Me Grow. Through WithinReach, Help Me Grow Washington provides a central access point (call line and website) for parents or providers to connect to developmental screening and a warm connection to a wide array of services and supports including ESIT, home visiting, parenting education, health services and benefit programs.
- **Medicaid Treatment Child Care (MTCC):** DEL and HCA have been working in partnership to define an array of services that better reflects the “intensive intervention and preventative services” which are allowable services for Medicaid reimbursement under the Affordable Care Act.

Home Visiting

- Efforts to expand investments in home visiting programs to reach a greater number of vulnerable children have resulted in Washington winning about \$24 million in competitive grants for FFY12-14 and an increase of \$500K/year in State General Fund dollars for SFY 13-15 with proportionate increases in private investments. Most recently, the Home Visiting Services Account (HVSA) is partnering with DSHS to increase access of home visiting to TANF participants, specifically targeting infant exemption and rapid re-housing.

Ready and Successful Parents, Families and Caregivers

Policies & programs that support strong families and parents and caregivers as their children’s first and most important teacher

- **Reach Out and Read (ROR):** DEL has supported strengthening connections between medical providers and parents of infants and toddlers to promote early literacy through the partnership with ROR, and currently serves 100,000 children and families. DEL and ROR are developing a funding and implementation plan to more sustainably deliver these services.
- **Strengthening Families:** Strengthening Families supports parent protective factors such as knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, parental resiliency, support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children. Trainings for child care providers is embedded for all Early Achievers, Quality Rating and Improvement System participants.

Ready and Successful Early Learning Professionals

High Quality professionals and environments

- **Early Achievers:** Infant/Toddler consultations to licensed child care providers have integrated with Early Achievers. DEL is currently standardizing and scaling up services to reach more providers. This includes the using Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND) as a standard approach to promoting attachment between babies and their caregivers.
- **Washington Statewide Consortium for High Quality Infant/Toddler Care:** The Consortium formed to support programs that applied for the federal application for Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership grants.

Birth to Three Plan Status Update

Washington Early Learning Partnership Retreat

Ready and Successful Communities and Systems

Child care subsidies that promote parent choice and access to affordable care

- **Child Care Subsidy:** Washington moved to a 12 month authorization for families receiving subsidies.

Infrastructure, Partnerships and Mobilization

- **State/Local Coordination:** The Early Learning Partnership, Early Learning Advisory Council and 10 Early Learning Regional Coalitions are implementing the State/Local Coordination recommendations, which includes formal communication linkages and feedback loops that create two-way learning opportunities.

Emerging Opportunities

- **Family Partnerships & Engagement:** DEL is working on increasing parent voice by identifying opportunities to bring families into the dialogue about the development of the early learning system with their expert lens as primary consumers.
- **Infant Mental Health Endorsement:** The Washington State Association for Infant Mental Health (WA-AIMH) is raising funds to bring the Michigan Endorsement System for Infant Mental Health. The endorsement is a way to verify that a professional has attained specific education and training and has acquired the necessary competencies to deliver high quality services.
- **Early Learning Regional Coalitions:** Coalitions are continuing to build their capacity and strengthen their identity and voice as tables for early learning partners within the 10 regions and as a statewide network. Coalitions play a critical role in providing advice and sharing information with representation on the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC).
- **Essentials for Childhood Initiative:** Partners across sectors are coming together to create the context for healthy children, families and communities using a collective impact approach. The goal is to have measurable and significant improvements in children’s health, development and education outcomes and eliminate equity gaps by 2025.
- **Frontiers of Innovation (FOI):** FOI is an initiative to improve outcomes for vulnerable children using science to inform early childhood policy and practice. DEL, DSHS, DOH, HCA and OSPI are using this science to inform service delivery to children and families in Washington.
- **Universal Developmental Screening Partnership & Help Me Grow Washington:** Systems initiatives involving multi-sector partners to assure screening for all children to identify concerns and risk for developmental delays and help families connect to existing programs and services.

Preliminary Recommendations

Recommendations	Action Steps
1. Establish a Birth to Three subcommittee of ELAC as an ongoing space for agency staff and stakeholders to focus on building a comprehensive system of supports for infants and toddlers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide staffing and support to convene and make the committee effective in the long term. b. Task the committee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Recommend areas where statewide agencies and partners can focus their attention and joint efforts to make a difference in advancing key B-3 strategies and a comprehensive system of supports. ii. Explore ways to leverage and enhance emerging opportunities to advance the key B-3 strategies. iii. Assess and share how current efforts may impact the overall system of services and supports for infants and toddlers. (ex: Infant/Toddler Consultation, Early Achievers, ECEAP expansion, etc.)
2. Design a system that is easy for families with infants and toddlers (in both informal and formal care) to navigate and transition through early learning, health and social services and supports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enhance and coordinate essential services and tools (ex: Child Care Resource & Referral, Parent Help 123, Help Me Grow, etc.) that help families connect to services, so they only need to go to one place to find

Birth to Three Plan Status Update

Washington Early Learning Partnership Retreat

Recommendations	Action Steps
	<p>what they need.</p> <p>b. Consider conducting needs assessments for parents and the workforce to understand where infants and toddlers are and who are our providers that serve them through our various systems (health care, early intervention, FFN, child care, home visitors, family support, child welfare, libraries, etc.)</p>
<p>3. Develop a long term ramp-up plan to improve the quality, availability and accessibility of formal child care for infants and toddlers.</p>	<p>Plan components should include:</p> <p>a. Reduce child/caregiver ratios.</p> <p>b. Increase the child care subsidy reimbursement rate.</p> <p>c. Attract and retain qualified teachers with professional development and competitive compensation.</p> <p>d. Provide inclusive quality improvement supports for all programs and providers and encourage participation in Early Achievers.</p> <p>e. Make child care more affordable by expanding subsidy eligibility to middle-income earners.</p>
<p>4. Explore opportunities to support the broader array of caregivers in communities, including families, friends and neighbors (FFN).</p>	<p>a. Understand current state and local efforts to support informal caregivers (ex: Child Care Aware network's FFN supports, Regional Coalitions, libraries and community-based organizations).</p> <p>b. Identify gaps in services, information and supports for informal caregivers and opportunities to close gaps and reduce barriers.</p>

Key Questions

- How do we reach all infants, toddlers and their families as early as possible with needed services and supports?
- How do we design a system that is easy for families with infants and toddlers to navigate and transition through early learning, health and social services and supports?
- How do we design systems and supports that respect and reflect the strengths, languages, cultures and communities of children and families?