



Whatcom Healthy Children's Fund

Report to the Child and Family Well Being Task Force on the Healthy Children's Fund Implementation

Meeting Date: 3.24.25

Healthy Children's Fund Narrative:

The Implementation Team who is working to develop the next Implementation Plan continues to meet and diligently evaluate strategies and policies regarding the implementation of the fund. Their recommendations continue to be continuing funding into 2026 projects that are effective, bolster current funding plans such as the subsidy, and start a few select new projects that build on past good work. The group is currently developing a community outreach plan to get feedback from residents across the county.

The Innovative Services Fund for Early Learning and Care RFP, has had seven contracts approved, with three more going to council on 3/25/25. There are an additional 3 contracts waiting final approvals. Two of which we hope to get approved at the April 15th council meeting. The last and final contract; for Tiny Steps Child Care Center, has required the operator to also apply for our upcoming capital RFP before we can move forward.

An RFP for the Subsidy and Rate Augmentation program is going through internal reviews before it gets released, working towards a release in Q2, with a 6-week open period.

An RFP for child care capital projects is being developed, goal to have it released by May of 2025.

A one-day training was hosted by the Perinatal Mental Health Task Force, on the topic of "The Intersection of Substance Use Disorders and Perinatal Mental Health". The entire Healthy Children's Fund Team was there to learn more. It was a very well attended event, in which many of the organizations we fund were there to learn about the important issue facing our community.

HCF Sub-Committee Update:

The Healthy Children's Fund Sub-Committee of the Child and Family Well Being Task Force, last met on March 17th, 2025 from 4-5pm.

The agenda topic included:

- The group requested to see the Administrative Budget for the HCF. Ann Beck division manager came to present the budget and answer questions.

Staffing Updates:

WCHCS staff are working to refill the Early Learning and Care Program Specialist position that serves HCF. The internal application open period has closed and interviews for internal candidates is taking place the week of 3/24/25. If an internal candidate is not found, it will open to the public.

The Executive announced his search for a new Director of WCHCS this week. The executive's office has been in communication with me and our division. They have expressed that they are committed to full support of the Department, with special attention for the Healthy Children's Fund. They have re-assigned work priorities for Jill Boudreau, Senior Policy & Projects Manager, to augment capacity on HCF related work during this transition.

Evaluation Updates:

The second RAPID survey will be launching on March 25th, 2025-April 7th, 2025. In addition to marketing materials for Health and Community Services social media and the HCF newsletter, materials were created for each school district and library system in our county. Communications were sent out asking them to distribute widely. Everyone who completed the survey last round, will also be sent an email asking for them to complete the new survey. The topics include the cost of child care and subsidies along with early intervention services. Lastly, we included a link for people who complete the survey to sign up for the HCF newsletter.

RAPID is hosting a conference in April, which Sarah Simpson will be attending.

A final internal review of the Evaluation Report for 2023-2024 is taking place this month.

Outreach & Communication Updates:

Two contractors were selected to provide communications support for the HCF. One of those contractors will exclusively create video and photo content, meeting with providers and those receiving funds and the other will be creating materials to showcase the work, communicate with potential contractors and share HCF resources with families across the county.

Contract Development Updates:

Organization	RFP ID	Days Elapsed RFP close - Award Letter	# days spent in contract negotiations (every day between dates, includes weekends, holidays and vacations)	# days spent in internal approval process (this should be completed in 28 days)	# days from Award Letter to Contract Approval
Generations Early Learning	23-87 Small Capitol Projects		1	10	
Doula Contracts (all)	Targeted Solicitation	77	8	10-49	
Mercy Housing	24-07 HCF Prevention	42			
Lydia Place	24-07 HCF Prevention	42	58	72	168
Ferndale Community Services	24-07 HCF Prevention	42	58	72	168
Mobile Mama	MRSC - Mental Health	13	20	28	70
Bellingham Food Bank	24-44 Basic Needs	42	8	8	35
Opportunity Council	24-44 Basic Needs	42	34	10	70
Lydia Place	24-44 Basic Needs	42	46	78	135
WCEL	24-60 Mental Health Expansion	29	31	18	76
Catalyst Therapies	24-60 Mental Health Expansion	43	2	8	48
Lydia Place	24-60 Mental Health Expansion	29	18	31	90
Ferndale School District	24-60 Mental Health Expansion	29	68	17	104
Brigid Collins	24-60 Mental Health Expansion	29	57	21	104
Peace Centers	24-26 Drop-In Care	147	53	25	71
Cozy Bears	24-66 Innovation	44	23	50	90
Aha! Childcare and ELC	24-66 Innovation	44	21	50	90
Ferndale School District	24-66 Innovation	44	31	28	90
More Smiles	24-66 Innovation	44	14	51	84
YMCA #2 (Curriculum)	24-66 Innovation	44	21	34	83
Opportunity Council (SEAS)	24-66 Innovation	44	24	50	96
Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association	24-66 Innovation	44	35	42	
Lummi Indian Business Council	24-66 Innovation	44	31	42	
YMCA #1 (OT/SLP)	24-66 Innovation	44	24	42	
Sendan Center	24-66 Innovation	44	17	42	
Whatcom Center for Early Learning	24-66 Innovation	44	15	42	
Tiny Steps, Big Leaps	24-66 Innovation	44			
RED are contracts that exceeded 90 days from award letter to contract execution					
GREEN are contracts that met 90 day goal					