Introducing New Funded Programs

Strengthening Families Washington (SFWA) is excited to announce the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funded programs for 2019-2020. Four organizations were selected to implement a community program focused on building access to high-quality parent support and utilizing the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework for children and families (http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/about/protective-factors-framework).

Funding is focused on community need, children prenatal to age 5, and takes into account serving unserved and underserved populations – both geographic and cultural. The end goal is strong families and reduced child abuse and neglect in Washington State.

**Catholic Charities Eastern Washington, Spokane County**

*Program Title: Implementing Circle of Security Parenting Groups to Prevent Abuse & Neglect*

Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) targets families with children ages prenatal to 3, at-risk of abuse and neglect. COSP empowers parents to increase family strengths, recognize the developmental needs of children and patterns set by their caretakers and stop negative generational cycles before they pass them onto children. Catholic Charities provides COSP to at-risk families facing homelessness, health challenges, substance use and co-occurring disorders, extreme poverty, unemployment, and who are fleeing unhealthy relationships and/or have been victims of abuse and neglect as children. This grant will expand capacity, adding a new cohort to Catholic Charities COSP services, including a weekly support group to engage and retain at-risk mothers who are pregnant (and have young infants) and providing reunion groups. COSP sessions are 8-10 weeks, 1.5 hours per week and facilitated by trained facilitators.

**Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC), King County**

*Program Title: Bilingual/Bicultural Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KP&L)*

CISC’s Bilingual/Bicultural KP&L groups are facilitated playgroups for immigrant families with young children (ages 0-5). The majority of the families are recent immigrants with very limited English skills, low-incomes, minimal social support and little familiarity with early learning and child development concepts. Each 90-minute playgroup will meet weekly. Using an emergent curriculum based on participants’ needs and interests, topics will include child...

Continued on page 2
development, age-appropriate expectations, and strategies to support the social and emotional competence of children in a culturally relevant context. Each playgroup is led by a bilingual/bicultural facilitator who can speak the primary language of the participants in the group and will include child-directed play, a group activity, intentional parent learning and peer support. All written information will be translated and culturally relevant materials, books and toys will be used.

**Room One, Okanogan County**
**Program Title: Programs for Healthy Families: Developing Resilience & Supporting Healthy Parenting**
Room One parent support programming integrates group-based education and meaningful, concrete resources for low-income, rurally-located families. Group-based parent supports include Mothering Groups (PEPS-based) and Parenting Groups (Positive-Discipline-based) facilitated by a trained Family Advocate. Mothering Group is designed to reduce isolation and stress among new mothers by cultivating social connections, building coping skills and strengthening knowledge of child development (guest mental health specialists address postpartum experience). Parenting Groups increase the confidence of parents with children ages 1-3 by developing their skills and knowledge of non-punitive discipline and healthy connections that promote child development. Parent input has re-centered the parenting groups around food preparation and meal sharing to enable a dynamic of sharing and connection among peers, and address food insecurity.

**Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital on behalf of Children’s Village, Yakima County**
**Program Title: Strengthening Families for Yakima County Parent to Parent**
This program serves parents/caregivers raising children with special health and/or developmental needs, including low-income families. The eight-week Holland Program provides support, education and social connections for parents/caregivers who are adjusting to a new diagnosis for their child. The curriculum, developed by Yakima County Parent to Parent, includes a specific focus each week: grief and loss; self-care; interacting with family and community; and resource identification. Staff includes Parent to Parent community health workers, a Children’s Village social worker (MSW) and one volunteer retired Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. All have participated in a two-day Strengthening Families/Protective Factors training. Yakima County Parent to Parent will offer sessions in English and Spanish; one virtual Holland session and monthly Holland Reunion groups in English and Spanish.

**Connecting with the GRADS Program**

The Washington State GRADS (Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Role Skills) program, implemented by the Office of Superintendant of Public Instruction, is a program for pregnant teens and/or young parents that supports them with high school graduation, economic independence, healthy relationships and effective parenting strategies. Sixteen of the sites across the state offer on-site childcare. The GRADS class is designed to help teen parents succeed in all aspects of their life. Students will find assistance with employment, careers, housing, healthcare, childcare and education. They also are a part of a statewide community of support designed to help them succeed and prepare their child for success in school.

Home visiting programs serving young mothers often work closely with their local GRADS programs, and participation in home visiting can earn class credit for the parent. Examples of collaboration include making referrals to one another, completing a visit at the school during class and keeping one another informed about the parent’s progress.

For more information about GRADS, please contact Michelle Spenser at michelle.spenser@k12.wa.us. For a list and contact information of all GRADS programs in Washington, visit Parent Help 123 Washington’s GRADS page.
In May 2019, Gov. Jay Inslee signed Engrossed House Bill 1638. The law removes the option for a personal/philosophical exemption to the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine requirement for schools and child care centers. It also requires employees and volunteers at child care centers to provide immunization records indicating they have received the MMR vaccine or have proof of immunity. The new law took effect on July 28, 2019.

Based on the interpretation of the state law, this change does not affect family homes licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, early intervention providers, independent contractors visiting child care centers (such as photographers), home visiting programs, or K-12 school staff who are not part of a licensed center.

We recommend that all family homes, early intervention providers, home visiting staff, and K-12 school staff who are in proximity to young children adopt the changes set forth in the new law as it will help your business and the health of children and families in Washington State.

DCYF and the Department of Health collaborated with Safeway and Albertsons to offer free MMR vaccines for uninsured child care workers and volunteers. Fifteen Albertsons and Safeway pharmacies across the state will offer MMR vaccines free of charge through June 2020 to child care staff and volunteers who need it. The pharmacies will also waive the administration fee.

If you’d like to read more about the law change, please visit the Washington State Department of Health law change web page. You will find a frequently asked questions section that addresses common questions from schools and child care centers.

If you have additional questions about the law change or how you can implement it in your family home, home visiting program, early intervention program or school setting, please email oicp@doh.wa.gov.

**Welcome Baby Cohen**

If you hear adorable squealing during a phone call with SFWA, don’t worry, it’s just our newest office baby Cohen Smith. Prevention Partnership Specialist Jenni Olmstead welcomed her son in February and returned to the office July 1. Cohen will be accompanying her to the office until September as part of our Infants at Work program. Welcome to the team, Cohen!
DCYF Unveils New Logo and Full Agency

At long last, the Department of Children, Youth & Families has a logo.

We are very excited to say farewell to the green state seal that we’ve had for the past year and show off our new logo.

The icon is made up of three parts:
• Empowering: Together, the three figures represent the growth of an individual.
• Inclusive: Individually, each figure represents children, youth and families.
• Positive: The supporting hand represents DCYF’s commitment to protect children and youth and strengthen families so they flourish.

This isn’t the only change at DCYF. The final stage of implementation for the new agency – the addition of Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Juvenile Rehabilitation, Office of Juvenile Justice and Child Care Subsidy Program, including Working Connections Child Care, took place on July 1.

This is the final step of a journey that began on July 6, 2017, when Governor Inslee signed House Bill 1661 creating DCYF.

The Child Care Subsidy Program eligibility staff will now be under the same roof as the policy and quality assurance staff at DCYF. DCYF staff worked directly with providers and consumers to make this transition as seamless as possible. The call center is now named the Child Care Subsidy Contact Center (CCSCC). Clients should contact CCSCC at 844-626-8687. The application for benefits will remain the same.

To commemorate the final stage of implementation, DCYF sat down with three staff members, including SFWA’s own Courtney Jiles. To view DCYF Transformations video, click here.

Thrive Washington is pleased to announce that the 3rd edition of the NEAR@Home toolkit is now available and offers home visitors more guidance on how to safely, respectfully and effectively address Adverse Childhood Experiences with the families they serve.

This new edition reflects what was learned when the toolkit was incorporated into a Facilitated Learning Process with 225 home visitors and 54 supervisors in the four states of federal Region X: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. It’s also informed by the evaluation work of our partners at Organizational Research Services and Portland State University.

Over the past year, the NEAR@Home team sought to learn how the toolkit and process fit with different cultures and communities of families – and the home visiting staff who serve them. They wanted to learn what adaptations were needed for home visitors to be able to find themselves in this trauma-informed, social justice-based process for bringing NEAR sciences to families. More information about this Facilitated Learning Process and how to bring NEAR@Home into your local home visiting efforts is available at NearAtHome.org.

The NEAR@Home Toolkit was first released in 2015 and remains a free resource. It has been downloaded more than 5,000 times by people all over the world. It is supported by a Region X MIECHV Innovation Grant.
Funding Opportunity

Essentials for Childhood has released a request for proposals. This opportunity will provide resources to support Vroom activation in community and tribal programs that work with families of children age 0 through 5. Vroom promotes positive adult-child relationships, back and forth brain-building interactions; and life skills promoting executive function. Successful applicants will describe how they use Vroom to connect with families and strengthen systems that support child health and development in communities furthest from opportunity.

See the Request for Proposals (RFP) for information about qualifications, approach and how to submit a proposal. You can download the proposal and at WEBS (Washington’s Electronic Business Solution). Any updates or amendments to this RFP will be published on WEBS. If you intend to submit a proposal, register to receive updates on RFP 24476 at WEBS.

Bids are due Sept. 6 by 5 p.m. PST., contact Bids@doh.wa.gov for more information.

Contact essentials4childhood@doh.wa.gov for inquiries about Vroom and Essentials for Childhood that are not about his opportunity.

Please share this announcement with your networks.

Staffing Transitions

We are very excited to announce two new staff and exciting changes for the Strengthening Families Washington team.

Some of you might be aware, Laura Alfani stepped up to fill the Strengthening Families Administrator role. As such, her Home Visiting Lead position has been vacant for several months. Courtney Jiles was selected to lead the home visiting work. Courtney is coming to the work after leading some really incredible work within our child abuse prevention portfolio, including community-based child abuse prevention strategies, group-based parent education, perinatal mental health policy, community development and more. She is a wise and graceful team member and will be learning about MIECHV and the innovation grant work over the coming months.

In addition, we also created the new role Primary and Community Prevention Manager, with Erinn Havig filling the position. Erinn has extensive experience in community prevention, both here at DCYF as well as in the field in several non-profits, and in state systems and child welfare work.

We are very blessed to have both these amazing and talented women leading this work.
First Step Family Support Center held a Community Cafe dinner through the support of the Strengthening Families Washington mini grant. Here are some highlights from the event:

Through the Department of Children, Youth & Family’s Community Prevention Funding, First Step was able to support 25% of the cost of a Community Cafe held at First Step Family Support Center on October 24 from 5-7 p.m. Ten adults attended from five families, including 13 children ranging in ages from 2 months to 10 years. There were multi-generational families represented, including two grandmothers, as well as two fathers. The event was hosted by two First Step Family Support Center employees who provide home-visiting services within the Parents As Teachers (PAT) model and facilitated a free Kaleidoscope Play and Learn playgroup in Port Angeles.

The Cafe started with a gracious welcome and a plentiful dinner. Families ate together, introducing themselves, and spoke about their families and children. After dinner, AmeriCorps Members provided service by helping with childcare and supervised the children in another room, enabling adults to talk.

The hosts gathered the adults in groups of three to four, gave an overview of the Community Cafe format and purpose, and began with the first question, “What does our community do well to support families?” Our model umbrella showed how the services listed from our community are broken into the Protective Factors that families valued. They emphasized that their appreciation of low or no cost opportunities for children to thrive. One caregiver wrote in an evaluation, “I learned about several free programs for children and families. I met a new mom friend. When I first moved in I felt like there weren’t enough child activities and today I feel different about that now that I know about these other activities.”

The second question was “What can our community do to help support families?” These questions were to solicit and make transparent which Protector Factors were being supported and which need to be developed.

In following up to the Cafe, one grandmother said to the Executive Director, “There should be a First Step in every community.” It is evident that the families thought First Step’s programs, including home visiting programs, drop-in center and parenting classes, met their needs and helped to foster well being. In a Cafe evaluation, one adult wrote, “First Step does a great job in our community.” Furthermore, the Cafe helped to motivate and mobilized families. Two parents have offered to volunteer their time and help provide services that were not presently available. One parent has started to organize a breastfeeding support group. Another parent volunteered to lead a cooking class. The Community Cafe model demonstrates how making the space for parents and caregivers’ voices subsequently helps to empower them. In an evaluation, one adult wrote that as a result of this conversation, “(I will) research more community based activities, support creating opportunities however I can.” This Cafe is an example of how parents identified needs, and now are helping to create the solution. We consider it a success for First Step Family Support Center to be able to support families’ voices, their agency, and the positive effect it has on our community.

We appreciate your intentional contributions towards creating a meaningful, celebratory forum for our clients’ voices at First Step and our community. With these results, we will consider how we can continue to build upon these protective factors and help families thrive.