



CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING TASK FORCE

AUGUST 23RD, 2021

Present: Alicia Hanning, Anne Granberg, Astrid Newell, Beverly Porter, Samya Lutz, Brian Nelson, Chris Cochran, Debbie Ahl, Gregory Hansen, Jamie Desmul, Jen Wright, Keith Montoya, Komal Shah, Mary Sewright, Mike Ford, Monica Koller, Ray Deck, Sarah Cook, Jed Holmes, Sterling Chick, Vesla Tonnesson, Yarrow Greer

Not Present: Carol Frazey, Escarleth DeLeon, Mara Kelley, Melissa Isenhardt, Rosalva Santos-Guzman, Sativa Robertson, Silvia Johnson, Urvasi Graham

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Welcome	<p>Introductions, land acknowledgement, housekeeping and review of agreements led by Allison Williams.</p> <p><u>Land Acknowledgement:</u> I would like to begin our meeting by humbly acknowledging that we are meeting today are on the ancestral and traditional territories of the People of the Salish Sea, who have lived in the Salish Sea basin and the North Cascades watershed from time immemorial, in particular the Lummi Nation, the Nooksack Tribe, and the Semiahmoo.</p> <p>May we be mindful of the inherent owners of this land, our children, who are the future stewards of the land and advocates for generations to come. May that truth guide our work and efforts to improve the well-being of all families and children, native and non-native, living in this beautiful county.</p> <p>This land acknowledgment is not meant to be a substitute for authentic relationship-building and understanding. It is meant to introduce us to one way we can show honor and respect for tribal sovereignty and tribal self-determination. Another way is to learn the history of the relationships between tribal nations and the U.S. government.</p> <p>Some of you may be aware of the recently completed Red Road to DC journey of a Lummi Nation House of Tears totem pole. During the spring and summer, the totem pole traveled from here to Washington D.C. to raise awareness about protecting Indigenous sacred sites and adopting policies and laws centered on Indigenous free, prior, and informed consent, a way to engage Tribal Nations in a way that maintains and respects tribal self-determination and sovereignty.</p> <p>Red Road to DC journey: https://redroadtodc.org/, https://redroadtodc.org/2021/04/12/creating-the-totem-pole/, https://www.instagram.com/p/CMfBhgMIAqX/?utm_source=ig_embed&ig_rid=8060d331-7f6f-46ae-8def-c70c1dd3c459</p> <p><u>Agreements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and self-care come first. • Be kind and gentle with yourself and others and assume everyone is coming from a positive place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Everyone has the best intentions. ○ Listen with an open mind and heart. • Be mindful of this space. Step-in and step-out/Step-up and step-back. Offer your truth and insights and listen to others' truths and insights. • Treat each other with honor and grace. We are all working under difficult circumstances. • Embrace diversity. Remember that we all come from different backgrounds giving us different perspectives and only when we embrace that diversity can we develop creative solutions to address the child and family well-being needs in Whatcom County. • What is said here stays here. • Have fun.



Approve Meeting Minutes	No amendments to discuss, minutes from August 9 th , 2021 were approved as presented.
Task force future	In the month of September future leadership plans associated with this task force will be discussed. Discussion will include what leadership roles look like, what this task force looks like as it matures, and what this means for work groups.
Upcoming events, community shares and shout outs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A work shop for families and community members to process COVID-19 experience through digital story telling is being offered. Collaboration with Generations Forward and Mt Baker Foundation. This is a space to grieve and let go of what we have been carrying, while identifying how resilient we are. Participants will receive stipends of \$150. https://www.connectingcommunitybellingham.com/digital-storytelling.html • WA State Budget and Policy Center is offering a virtual conferencing titled “Budget Matters” on October 19th, 2021. https://budgetmatters.org/ • An article “Pandemic and politics drive mass exodus of WA public health leaders”, featuring Erika Lautenbach. https://crosscut.com/news/2021/08/pandemic-and-politics-drive-mass-exodus-wa-public-health-leaders
Updates from each work group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Families First – We started by investigating models that have been successful and are now looking at how different models will line-up with our priorities. Rachel Lucy and Emily O'Connor were invited from Generations Forward Policy Advocacy and Funding Work Group to share some of the work on an Equitable Foundations Office for Family and Child Well-Being, drawn directly from the work from the Child and Family Action Plan which created this task force. Some recommendations were about specific policy oversight, monitoring accountability, and advancing the voice of children and families in county government, which has not been done yet. Other considerations about creating an entity or office are what would it own and be responsible for and types of trainings and oversight. This type of office would have been a useful structure in place for the pandemic response regarding children and family. Next is identifying how this type of entity or office would interact with other entities of the government and where it would fit. Currently identifying partners that should be a part of the conversation as it may be a new structure in county government that does not already exist. A self-imposed target is the end of the year. The COVID-19 Impact Assessment was released https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3760/COVID-19-Community-Health-Impact-Assessm which is like an aerial tour of the wreckage of COVID. All of the other work groups funnel into what this office may do, and therefore all connect. A recommendation was made to look at the newly proposed “Office of Climate Action in Whatcom” for possible model. • Increasing Family Involvement – The work group has been brain-storming family engagement recommendations, along with gathering background on current county practices such as training on diversity, equity and inclusion. The group has framed their ideas using 4 categories: commitment to family engagement; transparency in making systems change; representation of people using the system; and impact of family engagement. Next steps are to prioritize the 9 ideas using a set of criteria, revise as needed, crosswalk these recommendations with those in the Child and Family Action Plan, and identify partners for additional input. • County-Community Collaboration – The base of our work has been the Healthy Whatcom workshops that have focused on early childhood well-being and are in the process of building an action plan using the Results-Based Accountability framework. Our group is currently reviewing strategies to improve early childhood well-being, highlighting what in the action plan can be achieved specifically by the County government. Next is to identify what is already being done, and ways to expand on that work. There are 6 of 12 strategies identified, and now diving into the Child and Family Action Plan to identify what would make sense for a new entity to own. • Resources and Funding – Two parallel projects. We are just getting started on a fiscal mapping project and working with a specific contractor that will develop the map based on the work groups inputs. To meet the request about the proposed Whatcom County Council resolution about spending half of the ARPA dollars on childcare, the work group has a structured response and now seeking input from other people in the community. The outside input also extends to the task force members and will be communicated with individually to comply with OPMA. This will be brought back to the full task force in September for review.
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Closing	4:36 pm, work groups were opened
Next Meeting	Next regular meeting: September 13th, 2021 Location: Virtual