



## CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING TASK FORCE

MAY 8, 2023

**Present:** Allison Bishop, Anne Granberg, Beverly Porter, Carol Frazey, Chelsea Johnson, Christina Jackson, Colton Redtfeldt, Jen Wright, Katherine Orlowski, Kayla Schott-Bresler, Keith Montoya, Mary Sewright, Mike Ford, Pamela Jons, Ray Deck, Samya Lutz, Sterling Chick, Tilda Doughty, Vesla Tonnesson, Vann Dartt

**Not Present:** Gregory Hansen, Jamie Desmul, Monika Mahal, Samantha Cruz Mendoza, Rosalva Santos-Guzman, Sarah Kidd, Sativa Robertson, Sunshine Nelson, Yarrow Greer

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
<p><b>Welcome</b></p>	<p>Introductions, land acknowledgment, housekeeping, and review of agreements.</p> <p><u>Land Acknowledgement:</u></p> <p>I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are here today on the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples who have lived in the Salish Sea basin and the North Cascades watershed from time immemorial, in particular, the Lhaq'temish (LOCK-tuh-mish) people who we recognize today to be the Lummi Nation, the Nooksack Tribe, and Semiahmoo.</p> <p>May we be mindful of the inherent owners of this land, our children, who are our future. Our future stewards of the land and advocates for the generation 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 respect and honor for the sacrifices of the first people of this land.</p> <p>Please join me in expressing the deepest respect for our indigenous neighbors, and gratitude for the enduring stewardship of our shared lands and waterways. <a href="https://www.lhaqtemish.org/">https://www.lhaqtemish.org/</a> -Lhaq'temish Foundation</p> <p><u>Agreements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and self-care come first.</li> <li>• Be kind and gentle with yourself and others and assume everyone is coming from a positive place.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Everyone has the best intentions.</li> <li>○ Listen with an open mind and heart.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Treat each other with honor and grace. We are all working under difficult circumstances.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• What is said here stays here.</li> <li>• Have fun.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Fist to Five Consensus Tool – Amended 4.25.22</a></p>



<b>Approve Meeting Minutes</b>	No amendments to discuss. Minutes from April 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2023, were approved as presented.
<b>Agenda Overview, Meeting Input/Evaluation</b>	<p>Evaluation tool: <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf59ubhjlyXFZQJa0pXGgQQ5HhwJ1jamGFziQLXS6-zZC1hKQ/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf59ubhjlyXFZQJa0pXGgQQ5HhwJ1jamGFziQLXS6-zZC1hKQ/viewform</a></p> <p>The purpose of this Task Force was reviewed, as stated in the <a href="#">Ordinance</a>. “The purpose of Whatcom County Child and Family Well-being Task Force is to continually review Whatcom governmental impact on children and family make recommendations for improvement for all departments.”</p>
<b>Community Shares, Shout-outs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30pm to 8:30pm at Hotel Leo – Since Time and Memorial Family Night</li> <li>• May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1pm to 4pm at Bloedel Donovan – Head Start/Early Head Start/ECEAP Art Carnival</li> <li>• May 13<sup>th</sup>, Tamp Out Hunger Food Drive</li> <li>• The Whatcom Community Foundation did grant round for Project Neighborly. The goal of the funding is to support community to come together in ways that they might not otherwise to promote better relationships communitywide. There is funding for 30 projects, up to \$5,000, in places all over Whatcom County. As they come up, information will be shared here. Shout-out to the community trying new things and bridging divides.</li> <li>• Second Whatcom Family Cohort of the Parent Leadership Training Institute is graduating in Olympia and they have found grant money to continue the program.</li> </ul>
<b>Food access and food security</b>	<p>Ali Jensen presented a high-level overview of the Whatcom County Food System Plan, which has been presented to the County Council for approval. The Food System Committee has spent the past four years assessing and creating a plan for our county’s interconnected food system that “moves food from seed to sandwich,” knowing that no single action will fix food insecurity as the committee navigates the whole system.</p> <p>You can review the full plan here:  <a href="https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/73472/Food-System-Plan">https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/73472/Food-System-Plan</a></p> <p>Access to local meat processors was one issue of significant interest and support.</p> <p>Ali is passionate about the food and vegetable incentive, essentially a market match that has been decreased due to federal funding. There is work being done to help adjust this to the \$40 match that was in place when using SNAP/EBT food benefits. WIC has a large eligible population as well.</p> <p>Next steps: the plan will go back to the Food System Committee after reviewing additional input from the export farmers. Following committee approval of that input, it will go back to Whatcom County Council for adoption on June 6<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<b>Updates: Healthy Children’s Fund implementation, Child &amp; Family supervisor</b>	<p>Healthy Children’s Fund Implementation –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whatcom County Health and Community Services (WCHCS) staff, working as the fund administrator, is working on building an Implementation Team to develop a phased approach to assess readiness and prioritize strategies. time commitment and expertise needed. Task Force members will be asked to participate and to share their subject matter interest and capacity to commit to the Implementation Team and on ad hoc advisory groups. The Task Force representative will be expected to report back to the</li> </ul>



<p><b>position, ARPA RFP evaluations</b></p>	<p>Task Force and to commit to 2 to 4 hours a week in years one and two. Areas of experience and expertise include lived experience in traditionally underserved communities, early learning and care, supporting vulnerable children and families (particular homelessness, and behaviorally health), and applying racial equity principles in the implementation process. The current timeline includes finalizing the team by the end of May and then developing and prioritizing strategies and funding mechanisms in June and July. Members will opportunities to participate in the evaluation plan development. The WCHCS will be posting a position for a public health evaluator to assist with the evaluation planning soon. A Child &amp; Family Supervisor will be hired by June, a Contracts Coordinator by December, and the Evaluation Specialist by fall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keith Montoya shared a preference to engage the Task Force in the design of the Implementation Team roles. Jen Wright supported that idea and added involving the Task Force in every step of the process would be collaboration to the maximum extent possible.</li> <li>• Child &amp; Family Supervisor position – Christina Jackson was part of the hiring committee, which is still making final decisions. Christina and Beverly participated in asking interview questions. They felt that every person interviewed was well qualified. Beverly Porter felt it was helpful to have conversations with the applicants to see how they would be a part of this work and support this Task Force.</li> <li>• ARPA RFP evaluations – ARPA is American Rescue Plan Act federal funding created in response to COVID-19 pandemic. ARPA funds can be used somewhat broadly but have some restrictions on their use. Councilmember Frazey and former Councilmember Brown put forward a resolution to allocate a significant amount of our county ARPA funds to address childcare in our community. Since that resolution, the HCF was created. Due to this, a portion of the funds were allocated to capital projects to expand or create new facilities for childcare (\$8.5 million). An RFP is a Request for Proposal, which is an opportunity for entities to submit proposals on how to spend the funds. Ten RFPs were submitted, reviewed, and scored to make recommendations on which ones to fund. Six proposals were recommended. One withdrew so five award letters went out to organizations. There are a lot of contract logistics to ensure all there is compliance with the funding sources. There is a special case related to the Boys and Girls Club and their merge with Kids World. Their application does not create capacity, but instead retains capacity for childcare within the community. Around \$6.8 million has been allocated in formal awards and \$1.4 million remains. There is only one remaining proposal that did not get funding. There will be further discussion about determining projects to use the remaining funds. Members discussed the challenges around accessing these funds, and the need to identify to distribute HCF dollars to those that have more barriers and may need additional support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work group structure proposal</b></p>	<p>This is a follow up to a discussion begun in the May meeting about how to organize the Task Force workgroups and the types of work to be addressed. The co-chairs digested the discussion to put together a recommendation of three workgroups/subcommittees to discuss today. The decision would be made at the June meeting. Workgroup ideas and observations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposition 5, Healthy Children’s Fund, will be a significant focus.</li> <li>• A need for work on issues related to HCF (adjacent not directly connected). An example would be studying lead exposure.</li> <li>• Work on issues and/or recommendations that need to be tracked or have accountability. An example would be making sure meeting recommendations from reports.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A workgroup that would identify and act on issues needing a quick response.</li> </ul> <p>A quick temperature check was taken of the room, and everyone felt comfortable with this proposal.</p>
<b>Public Comment</b>	No public comment.
<b>Closing</b>	Adjourned at 5:27 PM
<b><i>Next Meeting</i></b>	<b>Next regular meeting: June 12, 2023</b> <b><u>Location: Hybrid</u></b>

