

ISLAND COUNTY CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE

JUNE 2021 RECOMMENDATIONS



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |

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A special thank you to the following Task Force members for their time, dedication, work, and commitment to envisioning a thriving child care system in Island County.

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Beagle, Wendy	Island County Human Services
Benalcazar, Veronica	ECEAP - Skagit Valley College
Bowler-Marere, Kristen	Opportunity Council
Denman, Rene	Toddler Learning Center
Graham, Vicki	Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce
Gunn, Jessie	Partners for Young Children/Whidbey Community Foundation/Parent
Johnson, Grant	Island County Planning Department
LaVassar, Gail	Readiness to Learn/South Whidbey Community Center
Mayhew, Marion	Community Resource Center of Stanwood Camano
Mennella, Bobbi	Parent/City of Langley
Sierra, Tabitha	WhidbeyHealth/Parent
Skaleski, Natalia	Parent/Military Affiliated/WhidbeyHealth
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY |

The Island County Child Care Partnership Task Force (Task Force), with grant funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce, came together in early 2021 to address the issue of child care in Island County. The Task Force, comprised of a diverse coalition of community members, including parents, child care providers, early childhood education experts, and businesses, came together to both assess the current state of child care in Island County, and make recommendations to improve access to quality, affordable, and equitable child care across the county.

Task Force Vision

Task Force members envision a resilient community that supports the wellbeing of all families, children, and early childhood professionals in Island County. This will include accessible child care and early education opportunities for all families, as well as a livable wage and opportunities for growth for early childhood professionals. Achieving this vision will require a dedication to equity through cultural and racial awareness, which ensures everyone has equal access and a voice.

Needs Assessment Key Findings

- 4,299 (62%) of children under the age of six have all parents in the workforce, and it is unknown where or how they are all being cared for while parents work.
- Of these 4,299 children, 2,340 (63%) would likely use child care if it were to be available but do not have access to a child care spot now.
- Of these 4,299 children, approximately 1,460 (34%) are infants and toddlers, and there is currently a total of 124 child care for this age group available in Island County.
- In Island County, of children who meet the criteria specifically for ECEAP/Head Start/Early Head Start, there are 1,642 (88% of eligible children) who do not yet have an ECEAP or Head Start spot available to them. There are 288 infants and toddlers currently who qualify, none of whom are served by Early Head Start in Island County.
- In order to meet the child care needs in Island County, approximately 460 additional educators would need to be hired. This does not include administrative and support staff.
- Parent/Guardian survey findings indicate that most (61%) of families would pay for child care if it were available and met their needs, and that there are currently disparities in access to preferred child care types across race and income.
- Child Care Provider survey findings show that providers face challenges related to turn over and finding qualified staff, and that half of providers are currently at capacity and have waitlists.

- Listening Session findings revealed that families are strained when it comes to balancing child care needs with their families' financial wellbeing, and that child care providers want to elevate the child care profession through improved compensation, recognition, and policy changes.
- Some data are not yet available concerning the child care needs of the military families. Additional research and data sharing with military organizations will support a plan that includes their specific child care needs and resources.

Summary of Recommendations

The Task Force advocates for local, as well as state and federal policy changes, that would support increased access to quality, affordable child care in Island County. A summary of the recommendations is below.

Recommendation 1 - Facilities

The physical environment in which children are cared for and learn, both inside and outside, are important factors in high quality early education. Finding suitable, affordable premises within Island County in which to house quality child care is a significant hurdle for local child care providers and educators. Regulations relating to the purchase of land on which to build new premises and to change the use of existing buildings is also a significant barrier.

The Task Force recommends that Island County review its code relating to child care and early childhood education premises. In addition, policymakers should look for creative and affordable ways to leverage existing structures and encourage the development of new child care facilities, including outdoor spaces.

Recommendation 2 - Training and Education

To be successful, child care facilities need a qualified, stable workforce that feels the community values their work and profession. This stable workforce relies on both education and training. Ongoing training for both directors and staff is vital for creating quality child care and retaining child care providers. In addition, leadership, management, and vision are leading factors of successful quality child care and early education operations. Training is currently both expensive and time consuming for local providers.

The Task Force recommends a combination of local, regional, and state support to prioritize education, training, and compensation for child care directors and staff.

Recommendation 3 - Funding

In contrast to the K-12 education system in Island County, child care programs and providers do not receive a dedicated amount of state and local funding support. Adequate funding for more high-quality child care programs in Island County is needed. This lack of stable funding, and the sustainability it brings, is a barrier to attracting needed child care providers to Island County.

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers address the issue of appropriate funding streams for child care programs and providers.

Recommendation 4 - Access

It is clear from current data that high quality child care is not available to all families and that the current COVID-19 pandemic has only decreased access to quality child care in Island County. Island County families lack equitable access across all geographic areas. Families particularly lack access to infant care and care for children whose parents/guardians work non-standard work hours.

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers prioritize access to high quality child care for all families.

Recommendation 5 - Quality

High quality child care has a profound positive effect on children's lifelong learning, the community, and society. High quality child care and early education is a factor in reducing poverty and achieving equity. It is cost effective in the long term as it promotes health and wellbeing for both children and their parents/guardians. In addition, Island County parents/guardians rated *quality* as their top priority when choosing child care.

The Task Force recommends that all providers, both centers and home care, should be required to take part in a quality assurance program, with equity and anti-racist principles centered in the implementation of this requirement.

Recommendation 6 - Additional Local Advocacy

The Washington State Child Care Collaborative Task Force issued a [full set of recommendations](#) in 2019 that outlines state level changes that are needed to support quality, affordable, and equitable child care. The Task Force supports the recommendations in this report and encourages local policymakers to support and advocate for these recommendations. There is also advocacy work that is needed locally.

The Task Force recommends local advocacy efforts that focus on outreach to the business community and integrating local child care programs within the public school system.

Proposed Next Steps

- Identify an appropriate organization/entity that participated in the Task Force to apply for additional funding through 2022.
- Engage in broad community engagement around the findings of this assessment and these recommendations.
- Bring the Northwest Center for Child Care Retention and Expansion/Opportunity Council (C-RECC NW) to Island County and create a local position to support this work. This work would specifically

focus on the feasibility of co-locating child care in new school buildings and workforce housing projects.

- Create an Island County Child Care Provider network with quarterly meetings to provide support to the child care workforce and facilitate access to training. Prioritize access to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and anti-bias, anti-racist (ABAR) training, particularly for providers without access to, and requirements for, regular training.
- Assess and modify local code to facilitate greater ease in permitting child care operations. Prioritize this work on the Island County Planning Department's work plan for 2022. Island County Public Health and Island County Human Services staff would ideally also participate in this process.

INTRODUCTION |

Access to high quality child care and early learning impacts community health across a variety of domains. The United States has largely relegated child care to a family/personal issue rather than a systemic issue with far reaching health and economic impacts. The COVID-19 pandemic served to reveal the inequities and cost of viewing child care outside of a systems approach. It is a sizable and intersectional challenge to address child care from a systems perspective, but investments in child care not only benefit parents/guardians and children, but also the overall health of the community and economy. This is a time to pivot, for local and state policymakers to invest in a wholistic picture of community health, including access to affordable, equitable, and quality child care for all families in Island County.

Child Care is Essential to Community Health

Through the Healthy People initiatives, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sets data-driven national objectives to improve health and wellbeing over the coming decade. The recently released Healthy People 2030, for the first time sets clear objectives related to social determinants of health.¹ Social determinants of health (SDOH) are, “the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.”²

Access to quality child care and early learning opportunities is one example of a social determinant of health. Whether families, neighborhoods, and communities have access to quality child care impacts overall health. For Healthy People 2030, there are two specific objectives related to child care - increase the number of children with access to high quality early learning opportunities and increase the number of children living with at least one parent that is working full time.² These objectives were set by HHS because it is clear how impactful access to quality child care and early learning is on children’s long-term health, and the importance of parents/guardians being able to access full time work in order to lift families out of poverty.

We all benefit from our entire community having access to quality child care and early learning opportunities, especially when access to child care prioritizes equity. Greater access to quality care can allow parents/guardians to seek employment or pursue additional educational opportunities. Children enrolled in high quality child care are exposed to a variety of developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that may not be available in all home environments. These benefits have long-reaching implications - investing in children having access to quality child care and early education promotes healthy development, and this often prevents the need for more expensive social service utilization and interventions later in life. In this way, communities benefit from having healthy children that then grow to be healthy adults.³

Child Care is Essential for a Vibrant Local Economy

Access to quality, affordable and equitable child care and early childhood education is not only good for the health of families and the community, but it is also necessary for workforce participation, economic stability, and recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴ Lack of access to quality child care has a negative

impact on both employers and workers. The most recent State of Children: Early Learning & Care report for the Northwest region, clearly shows substantial economic impacts on both employers and workers due to a lack of child care: employers in the Northwest region incur an annual cost of \$338.2 million due to a lack of sufficient child care for workers; 10,400 workers with children under six had to quit a job due to a lack of child care; and 5,200 workers with children under six were fired due to child care issues.⁵ A recent Ready Nation survey reported that, “almost two-thirds of parents facing child care struggles report leaving work early and more than half report being distracted or missing full days of work.”⁶

Locally, Island County’s labor market is characterized by a higher proportion of older workers and youth, and a smaller relative portion of early and mid-career workers when compared with the state. As individuals age out of the workforce, Island County will need younger entry level to mid-level professionals to take their place. Yet adults in the early to mid-phases of their careers also have families and need to move to communities that not only provide jobs, but resources so the entire family may thrive. For these early to mid-level professionals with families and young children, the impacts of inadequate child care results in long-term career stagnation and a lack of upward mobility, and this impact is more pronounced for members of historically marginalized communities.

Child care and early childhood education providers also need a supportive system in order to continue to operate their businesses, retain and recruit staff, and provide quality care and education. In the current system, providers are often caught between charging affordable rates and being able to provide competitive wages, benefits, and training to staff. The result is high staff turnover and little incentive for new providers to enter the field. The current system also contributes to inequalities for women and people of color, who represent a larger proportion of the child care workforce.⁴

For the overall health of our children, families, community, and economy, investing in child care just makes sense. “For every one dollar invested in high quality care in the early years of life, there is a more than seven dollars return in terms of dollars saved on later interventions and upward economic mobility in adulthood.”⁵ The Task Force firmly believes that investing in quality, affordable, and equity child care for all families in Island County is a necessary and smart investment.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY |

This is a summary of the full Island Child Care Needs Assessment created in partnership with Washington STEM. This report brought together publicly available, survey, and listening session data to understand the child care capacity, needs, priorities and possible approaches to quality and accessible child care in Island County. The full needs assessment is available at [2021 IC Child Care Needs Assessment](#).

Total Child Care Capacity and Unmet Need

There are currently 4,299 children under the age of six in Island County with all parents in the workforce that do not have access to a reliable child care spot. It is unknown how many families are managing the care of these children while parents work, and it is critical to provide safe and reliable options for these families. Given that not all families will opt for care, we take an estimate that if care was available, affordable, and met scheduling needs, 63% of families would likely participate. This means that there are approximately **2,340 children likely to enroll in child care if it were to be available in Island County.**

In terms of age, the most critical shortfall is for infant and toddler child care. There are currently only 124 spots available to infants and toddlers in the county, including licensed child care and Early Head Start programs. **Considering that approximately 1,460 infants and toddlers in Island County, this is an important gap to address.**

Additionally, in order to meet the child care need, approximately **460 additional early care professionals** would need to be recruited and supported to take on this role. This does not include the number of additional administrative and support staff that are often needed to support licensed child care.

Parent/Guardian Needs

In Island County, many single income families with a parent employed in the retail, education, health care/social assistance, and construction categories make between \$30,000 - \$59,000/year, well below the regional self-sufficiency wage of \$72,000. However, at this point, only those at the lowest end of the income range (under \$43,920 for a family of three) qualify for any form of child care assistance. This leaves many middle and single-income families in the gap, unable to afford care and ineligible for support. New legislation in the Fair Start for Kids Act will address these gaps; however, implementation will take time and many families will continue to struggle with affording care.

Underscoring this struggle are findings from the Island County Parent/Guardian Child Care Needs Survey and Parent Listening Sessions, where parents reported on the tensions between paying for child care and their families economic wellbeing. It is important to hold this in mind while considering that 61% of families reported they would use child care if it were to be available. While families desperately need more child care options, these options must be affordable and aligned to their families' needs in order for them to take it up. In terms of funding the costs to provide quality child care, we must consider what families are able and willing to pay, and consider additional funding approaches to cover all costs. The Department of Commerce has

stated that child care should not exceed 7% of a family's income, and on average in Island County, this means that child care should cost, on average, \$4,802 per year. Right now, the cost on average is \$13,000 per year.

Provider Needs

Child care providers across the county currently care for 550 (11%) of Island County children under age six. Half of the providers surveyed reported that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, they are at capacity and have waitlists (many parents also lamented the many and long waitlists they are on in hopes of child care). In listening sessions, providers raised issues related to how the early learning profession is perceived and valued in society. While they provide a critical service supporting young children's development and families' ability to work, they reported feeling undervalued and that low compensation and a lack of societal recognition to their work contributed to turn-over and difficulty recruiting new talent to the workforce. Providers also demonstrated a proactive attitude and offered several policy solutions, including enhanced technical support for child cares as they navigate the licensing process, as well as legislation to increase and fund pay for child care providers.

Conclusion

Island County has a growing economy and workforce, and there is a high need for child care that is affordable and accessible for working families. Approximately 2,340 new child care spots are needed, and there is an acute need to make infant and toddler age care more available. In order to expand the child care capacity of the county, significant investments in new child care programs, expanding the child care workforce, and sustaining existing programs and workforce will be necessary. The diverse experiences of families across race and income, as well as those who are active duty military, must be considered when developing approaches to make child care more affordable, accessible, and responsive to families' needs. It is likely that multiple options, with continued community input, will be needed to solve these child care challenges and enable Island County to support all of its children and families with high quality and equitable child care choices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force recognizes that recent or new legislation may address some pieces of the recommendations put forth in this report. The Task Force advocates for local, as well as state and federal policy changes, that would support increased access to quality, affordable child care in Island County. The Task Force recommends that policymakers at all jurisdictional levels commit to addressing access to quality, equitable, and affordable child care in upcoming budget and legislative sessions. Several recommendations in this report will necessitate additional evaluation. The Task Force recommends that additional funding be secured by one of the participating organizations to continue this work.

Recommendation 1 - Facilities

The physical environment in which children are cared for and learn, both inside and outside, are important factors in high quality early education. Finding suitable, affordable premises within Island County in which to house quality child care is a significant hurdle for local child care providers and educators. Regulations relating to the purchase of land on which to build new premises and to change the use of existing buildings is also a significant barrier.

The Task Force recommends that Island County review its code relating to child care and early childhood education premises. In addition, policymakers should look for creative and affordable ways to leverage existing structures and encourage the development of new child care facilities, including outdoor spaces. Potential action items include:

- Bring the Northwest Center for Child Care Retention and Expansion/Opportunity Council (C-RECC NW) to Island County and create a local position to support this work. This work would specifically focus on the feasibility of co-locating child care in new school buildings and workforce housing.
- Assess and modify local code to facilitate greater ease in permitting child care operations. Prioritize this work on the Island County Planning Department's work plan for 2022. Island County Public Health and Island County Human Services staff would ideally also participate in this process.
- Investigate the possibility of county/city owned property being leased (or purchased with grant/private funds outside of market competition) at low cost to build or house child care facilities.
- Earmark incoming monies from the American Rescue Plan Act toward exploration of new child care facilities and/or expansion of existing facilities and/or a fund to support local child care providers with operating expenses, including transportation expenses (buses/vans) to utilize public green spaces.
- Create an Island County Assistance Bulletin for local child care providers, planners, realtors, and developers to use to reduce confusion and create efficiency in planning and expanding child care. See example: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8065/11---Daycare-Operations-PDF?bidId=>

- Find local partners that will provide green space for newly licensed outdoor preschools in the county.

Recommendation 2 – Training and Education

To be successful, child care facilities need a qualified, stable workforce that feels the community values their work and profession. This stable workforce relies on both education and training. Ongoing training for both directors and staff is vital for creating quality child care and retaining child care providers. In addition, leadership, management, and vision are leading factors of successful quality child care and early education operations. Training is currently both expensive and time consuming for local providers.

The Task Force recommends a combination of local, regional, and state support to prioritize education, training, and compensation for child care directors and staff. Potential action items include:

- Create an Island County Child Care Provider network with quarterly meetings to provide support to the child care workforce and facilitate access to training. Prioritize access to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and anti-bias, anti-racist (ABAR) training, particularly for providers without access to, and requirements for, regular training.
- Support and locally promote the Shared Services HUB being launched by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families starting August 1, 2021.
- Advocate for additional state funding to support training for child care providers and staff, including leadership and management training.
- Advocate for minimum education requirements for all levels of providers, centering equity. Providers should be offered various routes (both pre- and post-hire) and funding mechanisms to meet these requirements.

Recommendation 3 - Funding

In contrast to the K-12 education system in Island County, child care programs and providers do not receive a dedicated amount of state and local funding support. Adequate funding for quality child care programs in Island County is needed. This lack of stable funding, and the sustainability it brings, is a barrier to attracting needed child care providers to Island County.

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers address the issue of appropriate funding streams for child care programs and providers. Potential action items include:

- Dedicated funding to support a local liaison to work with the Northwest Center for Child Care Retention and Expansion (C-RECC NW) in Island County per Recommendation 1.
- Consider a county levy for Early Learning Investments (e.g., the [Best Start for Kids levy in King County](#)).

- Advocate at the state level for consistent funding for early childhood education commensurate with K-12 education.
- Advocate for a living wage and access to appropriate state-level benefits for child care providers. Wages and benefits should mirror K-12 education standards.
- Create financial incentives for programs and providers who create opportunities for, and complete, additional educational requirements per Recommendation 2.

Recommendation 4 - Access

It is clear from current data that high quality child care is not available to all families and that the current COVID-19 pandemic has only decreased access to quality child care in Island County. Island County families lack equitable access across all geographic areas. Families particularly lack access to infant care and care for children whose parents/guardians work non-standard work hours.

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers prioritize access to high quality child care for all families. Potential action items include:

- Increase the number of ECEAP and Head Start programs in Island County.
- Outreach to the local business community to explore employer-based child care incentives and extended parental leave policies.
- Earmark incoming monies from the American Rescue Plan Act to create a fund to cover child care costs for families from historically marginalized communities or those unable to access quality child care.
- Continue to advocate at the state level for increased child care subsidies for families and increased reimbursement rates for child care providers.
- Provide local education and outreach to increase the use of the Working Connections Child Care subsidy program.

Recommendation 5 - Quality

High quality child care has a profound positive effect on children's lifelong learning, the community, and society. High quality child care and early education is a factor in reducing poverty and achieving equity. It is cost effective in the long term as it promotes health and wellbeing for both children and their parents/guardians. In addition, Island County parents/guardians rated *quality* as their top priority when choosing child care.

The Task Force recommends that all providers, both centers and home care, should be required to take part in a quality assurance program, with equity and anti-racist principles centered in the implementation of this requirement. Potential action items include:

- Assign additional funding to Early Achievers, and other quality assurance providers, to ensure that adequate support is provided for a consistent standard of quality child care throughout Island County.
- Encourage and support home care providers to also participate in a quality assurance program.
- Link home care providers with a designated child care center to help meet the need for training and support.

Recommendation 6 – Additional Local Advocacy

The Washington State Child Care Collaborative Task Force issued a [full set of recommendations](#) in 2019 that outlines state level changes that are needed to support quality, affordable, and equitable child care. The Task Force supports the recommendations in this report and encourages local policymakers to support and advocate for these recommendations. There is also advocacy work that is needed locally.

The Task Force recommends local advocacy efforts that focus on the following:

- Integrating local child care programs within the public school system, including physical placement on school campuses. Advocacy should especially focus on new schools being built in Oak Harbor.
- Outreach and collaboration with local workforce housing and affordable housing efforts to ensure the inclusion of the child care workforce in these discussions.
- Engagement (including education and outreach) with the business community on the negative effects of inadequate child care for Island County's workforce/working families. Business engagement efforts should focus on:
 - How businesses can help subsidize the cost of child care for their employees (including tax incentives)
 - How businesses can get involved with child care provider business needs (including skills such as budgeting, planning, finance, and feasibility studies)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RESOLUTION

BEFORE THE ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF CREATING	}	
AN ISLAND COUNTY CHILD CARE	}	RESOLUTION NO. HD-04-2020
PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE TO ADVANCE	}	
THE INTERESTS OF ISLAND COUNTY'S	}	
CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.	}	
BY PROVIDING COORDINATION AND	}	
RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO	}	
CHILD CARE PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND	}	
PROCESSES LONG TERM STRATEGIES	}	
FOR CHILD CARE ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY,	}	
AND QUALITY IN ISLAND COUNTY.	}	

WHEREAS, early childhood is a critical time for children's brains and bodies to develop in a healthy way and child care settings play a fundamental role in supporting the development of healthy children; and

WHEREAS, over half of all children between the ages of zero and five spend significant time in non-parental child care, positioning this setting to have a profound and long-lasting impact on a child's health, learning, and long-term success; and

WHEREAS, quality, culturally relevant and diverse child care supports children's healthy development and prepares them for success in school and in life; and

WHEREAS, child care is a sector that is critical to the vitality and economic security of our county, communities and families, and that families in Island County face significant barriers to accessing and affording high quality child care; and

WHEREAS, Island County's labor market is characterized by a higher proportion of older workers and youth, and a smaller relative portion of early and mid-career workers when compared with the state. Statewide, 22.3 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older. Compare with Island County, where 27.0 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older; and

WHEREAS, as the individuals age out of the workforce, Island County will need younger entry level to mid-level professionals to take their place. Yet adults in the early to mid-phases of their careers also have families and need to move to communities that not only provide jobs, but resources so the entire family may thrive; and

WHEREAS, Child Care Aware of America ranked Washington as the third most expensive state in the United States for home-based infant child care; and

WHEREAS, the cost of quality child care is unaffordable for many Island County families and additional support is needed to ensure that all children and families in Island County can access safe, enriching child care; and

WHEREAS, Washington State has identified the availability of high quality child care as a critical issue facing Washington families; and

WHEREAS, the Community Health Advisory Board recommends the creation of a Child Care Partnership Task Force as a committee of the Community Health Advisory Board per Article VI; Section 1.c. of Community Health Advisory Board bylaws; and

WHEREAS, the goal of this Task Force is to bring community voice coupled with locally sourced quantitative data together to edify and augment our understanding of the current and evolving issues of child care in Island County; and

WHEREAS, the initial tasks to be accomplished by the Task Force are as follows:

1. Develop processes and procedures to ensure that all work of the Task Force is embedded in principles of equity, family engagement, and results-based approaches
2. Develop recommendations for policies to promote quality affordable child care options
3. Develop recommendations to promote shared governmental and community collaboration
4. Develop recommendations for coordination and enhancement of existing initiatives focused on child care
5. Develop recommendations for new, or enhancement of existing, funding streams to support the development of new and innovative solutions to the child care shortage in Island County; and

WHEREAS, the initial work of the Task Force for the above tasks shall be accomplished and reported to the Island County Board of Health in the following phases:

Phase 1: This phase will involve convening the Community Health Advisory Board and working with key board members to outreach for additional needed Task Force members. Outreach specifically to marginalized communities and underserved areas will be utilized. Community Health Advisory Board members, Island County Public Health assessment staff, social media staff, and local parents/child care providers will be involved in this work.

Phase 2: Task Force members will be selected, as well as a facilitator. The mission and vision statements will be drafted. Task Force meetings will be schedule and convened. The epidemiologist and facilitator will provide an overview of the current state of the data on child care access and quality in Island County to Task Force members. Internal and external partners will present to the Task Force to give diverse perspectives.

Phase 3: The focus on this phase will be broader community and stakeholder engagement. A community child care needs assessment addressing the data gaps identified during the data presentation in Phase 2 will be completed. The needs assessment will include an online community survey for needs, focus groups for key stakeholders, and story capture effort for each key stakeholder group that can be used for public presentations.

Phase 4: The Task Force will review state child care recommendations. Assessment

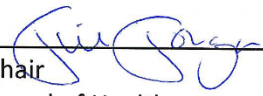
staff will compile a report and present the needs assessment findings. The Task Force will form initial recommendations and priority areas that align with state recommendations and complement work currently being done by Naval Air Station Whidbey Island/Naval Station Everett's Child Care Initiative work and other local entities.

Phase 5: Recommendations and priorities will be finalized. A public facing document/presentation that can be used for key stakeholder presentations, policy development, and recruitment of potential pilot project partners will be created. Priorities will focus on underserved areas and marginalized communities in alignment with findings from the needs assessment. Drafting of potential pilot projects that align with recommendations and priorities will be completed.

Phase 6: Task Force will publicize final public report to the community which includes identified pilot project. A plan for lasting partnerships and implementation of the chosen pilot project will be formed, NOW, THEREFORE,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the Island County Board of Health does hereby call upon the Island County Community Health Advisory Board and Island County staff to convene a Child Care Partnership Task Force to advance the interests of Island County's children and their families by providing coordination and recommendations related to child care programs, policies and processes, and long term strategies for child care access, affordability, and quality in Island County.

ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

 10/20/20
Chair Date
Board of Health

APPENDIX B: TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Task Force Member	Affiliated Organization	1+ Meetings Attended	Reviewed Recommendations
Barone, Nikki	Oak Harbor Boys and Girls Club	✓	✓
Beagle, Wendy	Island County Human Services	✓	✓
Benalcazar, Veronica	ECEAP-Skagit Valley College	✓	✓
Bowler-Marere, Kristen	Opportunity Council	✓	✓
Denman, Rene	Toddler Learning Center	✓	✓
Graham, Vicki	Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce	✓	✓
Gunn, Jessie	Partners for Young Children/Whidbey Community Foundation/Parent	✓	✓
Hughes, Molly	Mayor-Town of Coupeville	✓	
Johnson, Grant	Island County Planning Department	✓	✓
LaVassar, Gail	Readiness to Learn/South Whidbey Community Center	✓	✓
Mayhew, Marion	Community Resource Center of Stanwood Camano	✓	✓
Mennella, Bobbi	Parent/City of Langley	✓	✓
Sierra, Tabitha	WhidbeyHealth/Parent	✓	✓
Skaleski, Natalia	Parent/Military Affiliated/WhidbeyHealth	✓	✓
Tyhuis, Brian	Naval Air Station Whidbey Island	✓	✓
Wessels, Genia	Naval Air Station Whidbey Island	✓	
White, Heather	Child Care Provider – Camano Island Parent	✓	✓

APPENDIX C: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Audience	Desired Outcome
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the state of child care in Island County • Support of policy recommendations and participation in pilot projects • Volunteers; additional Task Force members
Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the state of child care in Island County • Action on task force recommendations/policy items • Continuation of the task force • Long-term funding
Business Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the state of child care in Island County • Support for policy changes/recommendations • Partnership for future projects
Child Care Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advocacy for policy recommendations • Participation in pilot projects
Partners/Specific Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the state of child care in Island County • Participation in pilot projects
Funders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the state of child care in Island County • Funding commitments to support pilot projects and ongoing Task Force work
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately and broadly report needs assessment findings • Commitment to covering issues related to child care and task force recommendations in Island County

Type	Objective	Action Plan/Notes
Digital/Print Report	Dissemination of needs assessment findings and recommendations in a visually appealing and inclusive format.	Create a condensed report for use in presentations, events, and on the website.
Social Media	Broad dissemination of the needs assessment findings and updates around policy and pilot projects developments	Social media will push out report findings and regular posts related to policy and recommendations throughout 2021.
Press Release	Publication of final report	Island County staff will release through normal channels when materials are ready.
Task Force Web Page	Main location to house dashboards, reports, etc.	Website will be updated with final materials. Will also house story content and link to dashboard.
Presentations	Broad dissemination of needs assessment findings and support for recommendations	Standard presentation with needs assessment key points and recommendations to be used by all task force members to give presentations to various key partners.
Community Discussions	Broad dissemination of needs assessment findings with the hope of hosting community discussions	Work with key partners in the community to create time and spaces for engagement. Task Force members, Community Health Advisory Board members, and Island County Public Health staff to facilitate this work in 2021.
Stories	Support of recommendations and pilot projects.	Stories will be incorporated into presentations. Consideration of an ongoing community storytelling project related to child care.

NOTES

1. United States Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2030. <https://health.gov/healthypeople>. Accessed on May 18, 2021
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4. Washington State Dept. of Commerce and the Child Care Collaborative Task Force. *2020 Child Care Policy Recommendations*. 2020. <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Dec-2020-C3TF-Legislative-Report-FINAL.pdf>. Accessed on May 20, 2021.
5. *State of the Children: Early Learning & Care – Northwest Region*. 2021. <https://washingtonstem.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SoTC-Northwest-3-26-21.pdf>. Accessed May 30, 2021.
6. Bishop-Josef S, Beakey C, Watson S, et al. *Want to Grow the Economy? Fix the Child Care Crisis: Workers and Employers Feel Pain in Pocketbooks and Productivity*. Council for a Strong America, Ready Nation; 2019. <https://www.strongnation.org/articles/780-want-to-grow-the-economy-fix-the-child-care-crisis>. Accessed May 20, 2021.