

**Charles D. Baker**  
Governor

**Karyn Polito**  
Lieutenant Governor



**Marylou Sudders**  
Secretary

**Monica Bharel, MD, MPH**  
Commissioner

# **Department of Public Health**

## **Chapter 171 Report and Annual Individual and Family Support Plan**

### **Fiscal Year 2021**

**February 2021**

Massachusetts Department of Public Health



**Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
Annual Family Support Plan  
Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21)**

***Background***

The Mission of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) is to promote the health and well-being of all residents of the Commonwealth by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity for all people.

DPH programs, services, and educational initiatives are designed to address social determinants of health, defined as “the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, which contribute to health inequities,” and to recognize and strive to eliminate health disparities among populations in Massachusetts wherever they may exist. DPH works to prevent disease and disability and reduce the impact on individuals and society of preventable health conditions and secondary effects.

Within DPH, the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition (BFHN) is home to many programs serving children and youth and their families, including the Massachusetts Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Title V Program. Title V is an 85-year-old program enacted as part of the Social Security Act of 1935. Title V works to ensure the health of the nation’s mothers, women, children, and families. This includes children and youth with disabilities and chronic illness and their families who are served by the Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs (DCYSHN). The DCYSHN was given the responsibility for developing the DPH Family Support Plan as mandated by **Chapter 171 of the Acts of 2002: An Act Providing Support to Individuals with Disabilities and Their Families**. Since the passage of Chapter 171, BFHN has examined existing programs annually to assess their level of meaningful family involvement. This is done by soliciting family/consumer input, which is used to increase the degree to which programs and services can be more responsive and family-directed and provide more flexible supports. This ongoing work is entirely consistent with the Title V philosophy of meaningful and sustained family engagement in all aspects of policy development and program planning.

**Overview of Family Support**

DPH has a long-standing commitment to effective, collaborative partnerships with families and works to ensure that programming is responsive to needs identified by families and consumers. To ensure that this commitment is realized, DPH employs a broad definition and multi-faceted approach to family support, starting from a commitment to family-centered care, a core component of maternal and child health, which is defined by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) as:

*"Family-Centered Care assures the health and well-being of children and their families through a respectful family-professional partnership. It honors the strengths, cultures, traditions and expertise that everyone brings to this relationship. Family-Centered Care is the standard of practice which results in high quality services."*

In addition, DPH provides a variety of flexible family-identified supports, ranging from a small amount of funding that individual families can use as needed, to skill-building opportunities that assist families to become confident, well informed, active partners in their own children's health, and in policy development and systems enhancement. DPH programs provide information and referral to resources to assist families in the care of their children with special health needs and offer

opportunities for family-to-family support and networking, recreational activities and assistance with accessing community resources.

At DPH, family support activities are primarily housed within BFHN's Divisions of Early Intervention (EI) and Children & Youth with Special Health Needs (DCYSHN) and are overseen by the Director of the Office of Family Initiatives (OFI), which is a senior management position within BFHN. The Director's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of, receive information about, and know how to work in partnership with families,
- Ensuring that all Bureau initiatives include families/consumers in planning and monitoring activities,
- Developing new and ongoing opportunities for family involvement,
- Providing training, mentoring, financial and other supports to families partnering in planning, policy making, and program implementation,
- Identifying and sharing emerging issues for CYSHN and their families,
- Representing BFHN and its commitment to family-centered services in interagency initiatives,
- Representing BFHN and its commitment to family-centered services with other organizations on the state and national level, and
- Providing the "family voice," both personally and via inclusion of other family members and family organizations, in Bureau and Department activities.

In FY20, both divisions worked to expand engagement and partnerships with families and to ensure that all staff understand and implement the definitions and commitment. We continue to be members of a cross-sector initiative of 11 state agencies and a coalition of more than 500 community stakeholders to finalize and disseminate the [Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement Framework](#), a roadmap for family engagement for the state.

DCYSHN has developed and vetted a new definition of Family Engagement as one of its critical core values that will guide work going forward:

*Family Engagement is the intentional practice of partnering with families to support positive outcomes in their lives and to improve and enhance our work by actively developing ways for families to share their lived experience and expertise.*

*Family Engagement is based on the belief in the importance of family involvement and leadership at the individual, community and systems level and is infused with the DCYSHN core values.*

### ***Process for obtaining "substantial consultation" from families regarding flexible support needs***

Substantial consultation to inform the DPH family support plan for FY21 has been changed by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our primary information gathering tool, a family needs questionnaire, was launched at the annual Federation for Children with Special Needs' Visions of Community (VOC) conference on February 29, 2020, which was attended by more than 900 families. The questionnaire is available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and can be completed in hard copy or online. Typically, we follow up the dissemination at VOC by distributing the questionnaire through DCYSHN programs, community partners, health care providers, CHCs, other partners, and various social media platforms. In FY20, however, the Governor's March 10, 2020 State of Emergency and "stay at home" guidance resulted in suspension of survey distribution. Instead, we decided to utilize input that came in through the division's two toll-free call lines and other direct service programs. In addition, as a program funded by the MCH Block Grant, the Title V program is mandated to conduct a comprehensive, state-wide needs assessment every five years. BFHN conducted a needs assessment

in FY20 and gathered a significant amount of information through surveys and focus groups prior to the onset of COVID-19. OFI staff, who are all parents of CYSHN and connect with families on the local level, advised about the unmet needs and emerging issues they heard from families. Information from these sources informs the Chapter 171 report.

Other DCYSHN program staff include questions about services and supports in their regular contacts with families and in their individual program evaluation efforts. Emphasis is placed on obtaining substantial consultation that reflects the geographic, linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic diversity of the state.

We ask and listen for information about unmet and under-met health related needs. This year, we have learned a great deal about how fragile the safety net can be in crisis situations.

A key theme that emerges annually from substantial consultation with families whose children have special health needs centers around the need for access to the most current information about resources, services, and supports available to them. To respond to this in FY21, DCYSHN will work with the Federation for Children with Special Needs to expand the capacity of the Family TIES Directory of Resources for Families of Children and Youth with Special Needs. Families remind the DCYSHN that we should be sharing this information with them, with their health care providers, and through the schools their children attend. In addition, families let us know about the need for more respite and nursing care and assistance with school related services. In instances where these needs fall outside the purview of the DCYSHN, case information is shared with sister agencies.

In addition to increasing access to resources in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and on the increased needs expressed by many families, a central focus of the FY21 Chapter 171 plan will be on supporting emergency care planning for families who have children and youth with special health needs.

### ***Focus Areas***

In FY21, DPH will focus Chapter 171 activities in three primary areas:

1. Ensuring that families who have contact with DCYSHN have an Emergency Care Plan that includes identifying alternate caregivers in the event that parents become ill. This topic will be included in all division program intakes. A web page of resources to support those families who either do not have a plan or need to update their plans will be developed and promoted.
2. Cross-bureau and cross-sector work to implement the [Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement Framework](#) with a strong focus on the intersection of family engagement, COVID-19, and racial equity. This will include on-going participation in the state planning team and internal coalition to host virtual listening tours and affinity groups so that all stakeholders can have input into what is needed for successful implementation.
3. Incorporating the “Charting the LifeCourse Framework” into transition activities for youth with special health needs, their families, and providers. The framework is a person-centered planning tool created to help individuals and families of all abilities and all ages develop a vision for a good life, think about what they need to know and do, identify how to find or develop supports, and discover what it takes to live the lives they want to live. The framework champions transformational change through knowledge exchange, capacity building, and collaborative engagement at the individual, family, professional and policy leader level. The tool includes healthy living and COVID-19 elements in addition to many others.

### **Family Empowerment and Family Leadership Development Activities**

### *Current and On-going Activities:*

At DPH, family empowerment and family leadership activities are integrated and are offered in the following ways:

- Participation in policy development, program planning, implementation, and evaluation coupled with skill-building opportunities that assist families and consumers to confidently and effectively participate.
- Participation in the MCH Block Grant process, from needs assessment to priority setting, to implementation and evaluation.
- The Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP), which is a parent-designed and staffed project that reaches families whose children are enrolled in EI, offering skill-building for leadership and lifelong advocacy skills development. Through the EIPLP, DPH offers a variety of opportunities that assist families to take on roles across the early childhood and special health needs systems of care. For example, in FY20, EIPLP provided a virtual skill-building session to prepare family members to take part of RFR reviews. Twenty parents participated and received stipends for their time. Parents are encouraged and supported to partner with their own EI programs, at regional early childhood events, on the state level as advisors to the DPH, as members of the federally mandated Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), and nationally to share information about Massachusetts and to learn and bring home information from other states about ways that families can help define and improve services systems. The EIPLP Family Engagement & Collaboration Coordinator has identified and supports a broad cohort of culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse families to participate in EI and DCYSHN activities. In FY20, several diverse families were recruited to take part in ICC committee work and be part of robust racial equity work.
- Family TIES, (Together in Enhancing Support) a program of the Federation for Children with Special Needs funded by DPH, is the statewide information and referral network for families of CYSHCN and their providers. Family TIES staff, all of whom are parents of children with special health needs, are located in each of the DPH regional offices, which gives them familiarity with local resources. Family TIES also serves as the Massachusetts Parent-to-Parent program, an affiliate of P2P USA, connecting families with similar life circumstances, and as the Early Intervention central directory. Families who access services from Family TIES are offered opportunities to become advisors to DPH and to take on roles within DPH programs and other public policy venues. Training, mentoring, and financial support are available to these families.
- In FY19/20, the Office of Family Initiatives and the EIPLP launched a new leadership skill building activity, ***Finding Your Footing: Using Your Family's Experience to Improve Systems.*** This opportunity, which is available to parents and caregivers of children about to transition or recently transitioned from Early Intervention, attracted broad interest. Fifteen parents participated in this pilot. In FY20 we were able to conduct four of the six planned meetings bringing families together on a bi-monthly basis to continue learning, building community, and receiving access to opportunities. As of March 15, 2020, the in-person meetings were suspended.
- DCYSHN Care Coordinators, DPH Public Benefits Specialist, the Community Support Line, and Family TIES staff guide families through service systems and support them to learn about public benefits and programs, eligibility requirements and “who to call,” as they navigate systems of care. During the COVID-19 emergency the majority of calls received by all programs had to do with issues such as food scarcity, care for children at home while parents worked and transportation assistance.
- Collaboration with other family organizations such as the Federation for Children with Special Needs, Mass Family-to-Family Health Information Center, PPAL, and Mass Families Organizing for Change to share emerging issues, training, and skill-building opportunities.

Families are regularly surveyed about support and training needs and best uses of flexible funds through the Office of Family Initiatives, Community Support Line, Care Coordination, and Regional

Consultation Programs. These programs also provide training and skill-building opportunities for families to grow their knowledge of systems of care and their leadership and advocacy skills.

#### *New Initiatives:*

- Expand work to address racial justice, inequities and disparities by offering training and skill building for all staff. These include Town Hall meetings, brown bag lunches, affinity groups and dissemination of the Racial Equity Data Road Map, understanding that increased staff knowledge and awareness will lead to improved service delivery and support for families.
- Lead the efforts to increase engagement with diverse families based on what these families and communities say about challenges and ways to address them.
- Explore additional ways to engage with families and provide skill building and supports, including a version of Finding Your Footing and/or the Family Leadership Training Institute virtually.
- Strengthen existing and identify new partnerships to support families of CYSHN during the current pandemic and to be prepared for any new crises.
- Collaborate with DPH Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management.

#### **Family Support Resources and Funding**

##### *Current and On-Going Activities:*

Family support activities continue to focus on skill building and leadership development at the community level, production and dissemination of informational materials, assistance in forming local support groups, and expansion of the statewide Parent-to-Parent program. This program trains volunteer parents to offer telephone support to families with similar life experiences. In FY20, 52 Parent-to-Parent matches were completed. ***“Listen and Learn,”*** the training program for mentor parents, is available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish. Currently, there are 228 active trained support parents with the capacity to offer support in eight languages. DCYSHN direct service staff provides information about and referral to resources, public benefits, and navigating the health care system. Materials developed in response to previous substantial consultation from the Chapter 171 Plan, including a brochure called **“A Bridge to Adult Health Coverage and Financial Benefits,”** medical home fact sheets for families available in six languages, and a **Guide to Using Health Information on the Internet** continue to be distributed. DCYSHN maintains a website to support families, youth and providers around health transition: [www.mass.gov/dph/youthtransition](http://www.mass.gov/dph/youthtransition). The website contains checklists, tip sheets, training curricula, and links to a number of useful transition resources.

When families need information and support from other agencies, staff help them identify which agency would have primary responsibility for their presenting issue and facilitates connections with these agencies.

BFHN maintains a toll-free Community Support Line available to families of CYSHN and their providers. In FY20, the Line received 563 calls, of which 159 (28%) were from families. Social workers on the line offer information about statewide resources, public benefits, and other DPH programs and make referrals to Care Coordination for eligible families. An additional toll-free line staffed by Family TIES Parent Coordinators provides information about local and community resources and responded to more than 2,000 calls from families and providers in FY20. This includes 149 parents for whom English is not their first language.

#### **Down Syndrome**

In accordance with Chapter 126 of the Acts of 2012, which named DPH to provide families receiving a pre or post-natal diagnosis of Down syndrome, "up-to-date evidence-based, information for

providers and families," DCYSHN continues to work in collaboration the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress to share information, monitor and update the website of resources at [www.mass.gov/dph/downsyndrome](http://www.mass.gov/dph/downsyndrome).

### **Early Intervention**

Family support initiatives are provided by six statewide Early Intervention Regional Consultation Programs (RCPs). Each RCP receives funding to provide respite services to the families they serve. In FY20, 663 families received \$216,000 in respite funding. RCP staff provides training and on-site consultation to center-based and family child care programs and to public preschools to support the inclusion of children, ranging from birth to age five with complex medical needs. The EIPLP collaborates with the RCPs to provide socialization and networking opportunities for families whose children have complex medical needs.

### **Other DCYSHN Programs**

MassTART (Massachusetts Technology Assistance Resource Team) is a program in which DPH contracts with agencies across the state to provide consultation to school personnel and families to support the inclusion of children assisted by medical technology in public schools.

MassCARE (Massachusetts Community AIDS Resource Enhancement) provides medical, care coordination, and family and youth supports and training to individuals living with or affected by HIV/AIDS.

In FY20, the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program (UNHSP) made 3,531 calls and sent 945 letters to families whose children either did not pass or missed their initial hearing screening or diagnostic center appointments. Of 184 infants diagnosed with hearing loss, 159 (86%) were enrolled in Early Intervention.

A Memorandum of Understanding allows DPH to connect families to the Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) which is able to provide additional supports. The UNHSP employs a parent of a young child with hearing loss as a parent consultant. This consultant makes personal contact with every family whose child receives a diagnosis of hearing loss to offer family-to-family support and information about community and statewide resources. In FY20, the program distributed 50,900 brochures in 13 languages, as well as 143 English and Spanish parent information kits, to families and providers.

The UNHSP has a strong focus on family support activities. In FY20, the program hosted seven events across the state. Maintaining its commitment to connecting parents and providing education and socializing, UNHSP provided 6 parent calls (74 participants) and hosted five Facebook Live videos (2500 views) during the pandemic. The program works closely with the OFI and its Family TIES Program to provide parent-to-parent support. There are currently 15 parents of children with hearing loss trained to be Mentor Parents in the Parent-to-Parent Program.

The Pediatric Palliative Care Network (PPCN) provides services to children with life-limiting conditions and their families through contracts with eight pediatric hospice organizations. In FY20, a significant number of children and their families received palliative care services including, pain and symptom management, case management, respite, complementary therapies, and bereavement care.

### **Flexible Funding**

In addition to these programs and services, DPH is able to make some flexible funding available to families to address medical and other health-related needs not covered by other sources. Special funds help eligible families purchase (among other things) hearing aids, medications, assistive technology, respite services, home and vehicle modification, and reimbursement for travel expenses incurred for



the care of their children with special health needs. Funds are disseminated through DPH vendors and in some cases from DPH directly to families. In FY20, 170 children and families received over \$2 million in funding from the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund (CICRF). The six RCPs distributed another \$303,140 to 925 families.

The Care Coordination program distributed \$213,000 to 513 families for family support. An additional \$75,000 of emergency funding was added to these funds to assist 157 families impacted by job loss or illness during the Covid-19 pandemic. Another \$20,000 was available through the Hearing Aid Program for Children and five families received assistance with purchase of hearing aids. We also allocated \$90,000 for family involvement activities across BFHN, including participation in focus groups, proposal reviews, as trainers, community-based projects, attendance at conferences and other skill building opportunities, at social activities and as participants in leadership training. About 250 Family Advisors, individuals who offer to assist EI and DCYSHN, responded to those and other requests for their expertise.

#### *New Initiatives:*

- Assist to implement a new Massachusetts Title V Block Grant state priority to enhance Family, Fathers and Youth Engagement. Measurement will be how many individuals/families participate and are compensated for their time and expertise.
- Facilitate calls for parents of DHH children to speak with MCDHH Children's Specialists.
- Identify new funding sources for increased family support.

#### *Accessing Services and Supports*

##### *Current and Ongoing Activities:*

DPH uses a number of strategies to educate families and consumers about availability of and access to services. Some of these include public service announcements, Early Intervention Child Find, dissemination of Medical Home fact sheets for families and providers, program specific newsletters such as EIPLP's ***Parent Perspective***, and the MassCARE newsletter. All staff present regularly at conferences and to community groups. Several programs have active Facebook pages that post articles, ideas, and links to local, statewide, and national sites with interesting and helpful resources for families whose children have special health needs: DCYSHN (1135 likes), UNHSP (829 likes), and EIPLP (1087 likes). The Community Support Line, CICRF, Family TIES, Care Coordination, and PPCN staff reach out to hospitals, schools and community settings where individuals with disabilities and their families receive services to share information.

From March 2020 to June 2020, these social media platforms have been very helpful in disseminating information about resources and supports for families during the pandemic, as well as bringing in information about family needs.

These programs work together regionally to ensure that family needs are met. The DPH Public Benefits Specialist provides training to families and providers across the state and offers technical assistance through a toll-free number and at in-person trainings. In FY20, 64 individuals including 14 parents received personalized TA and training from this specialist. Community Support Line, Family TIES and EIPLP all maintain toll-free numbers. Family TIES and EIPLP also host websites and listservs. Family TIES distributed 1858 project brochures in English, Spanish and Portuguese and 968 Resource Directories. Eight editions (two hardcopy and six electronic) of the ***Parent Perspective*** have been distributed to 25,000+ families and professionals. These materials are available for download on project websites.



DCYSHN program information, including the Family Support Plan, is available on-line at [www.mass.gov/dph/specialhealthneeds](http://www.mass.gov/dph/specialhealthneeds). DCYSHN program brochures and magnets, which have contact information, are widely disseminated and available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. There is interactive capability on the DPH website and on BFHN project sites for families to offer feedback and suggestions.

#### *New Initiatives:*

- Translate the Chapter 171 information gathering tool into Vietnamese and Haitian Creole.
- Expand information dissemination on social media and other virtual mechanisms.

### **Culturally Competent Outreach & Support**

#### *Current and Ongoing Initiatives:*

Collaboration with the Office of Health Equity (OHE) is ongoing within DCYSHN. OHE provides resources and technical advice on the application of the national CLAS (Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Services) standards to ensure that programs are able to integrate and use the standards effectively (<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/health-equity/clas-intro.pdf>). OHE also provides guidance and support on principles, policies, and tools for language access and disability issues, including access to the Health and Disability Partnership, DPH's statewide advisory board on disability issues.

Materials about all programs for individuals with special health needs and their families are available in a variety of languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Russian, Cambodian, and Vietnamese. All programs have staff with multiple language capability and have access to interpreters, including ASL and tactile interpreters for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and visually impaired individuals. Whenever possible, DPH hires or contracts with individuals who are bilingual, bicultural, and familiar with the culture and customs of families who receive services from our programs.

Outreach initiatives, designed to build relationships and reduce health disparities, take place with community-based organizations where ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse individuals and families receive services and are comfortable. These include community health centers, WIC offices, and family organizations. Family TIES contracts with native Spanish and Portuguese speakers to respond to requests for information and referral and for Parent-to-Parent matches. As part of a major focus on outreach to underserved groups, Family TIES staff works with a number of community-based organizations, including, but not limited to, the Somali Development Centers in Holyoke and Boston, SCAN 360 serving the Hispanic population in Springfield, the Vietnamese Community Centers in Boston and Worcester, MAPS serving Portuguese speaking families, and the Haitian Community Center in Boston. This is an opportunity to share information about community resources and the availability of flexible family supports. In FY20, Family TIES staff continued targeted outreach to under-served populations to offer information about the Medical Home approach to care and transition from pediatric to adult care.

As a priority in the MCH Block Grant process, DPH made a commitment to racial justice and health equity. Over the last year, multiple training opportunities have been made available within BFHN and BCHAP first to leadership and then to staff more broadly to support them to understand the foundations of racial inequities and to strategize about how to apply this knowledge to our work. BFHN has developed and implemented racial equity workgroups in the areas of procurement, hiring, professional development and communications. In FY20, multiple opportunities including brown bag lunches, town hall meetings, and affinity groups were offered.

The NCSEAM (National Center for Special Education Accountability & Monitoring) Family Survey is available in Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Vietnamese, English, and Spanish. In calendar year 2019, 4,719 surveys were completed and returned. These included 850 in Spanish and 100 in the three other languages available.

The EIPLP hosts families to attend the annual Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium Conference. One family from each of 59 EI programs are funded to attend and fully take part in all conference activities, including a parent dinner which is open to all parent attendees and their families. EIPLP has a strong focus on recruiting families from diverse communities. In FY20, this conference was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Specific training about organizing complex and multiple records, emergency preparedness, and building community and Parent-to-Parent support are available in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Vietnamese. The EIPLP newsletter parent articles and updates on the EI Family Survey are translated into Spanish in each edition. DCYSHN programs continued to utilize telephonic language lines provided by the department.

#### *New Initiatives:*

- Explore opportunities to hold MEIC virtually. EIPLP to survey families to assess interest and ability to participate.
- Explore possibilities for remote family leadership development for diverse populations.
- Explore new methodology to disseminate the NCSEAM Family Survey to be available remotely
- Continue to incorporate welcoming messages into correspondence and announcements aimed at LGBTQ communities and individuals.
- Provide support for a Black outreach coordinator at the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

#### **Interagency Collaboration**

##### *Current and On-going Activities:*

- Development of a draft statewide framework for family engagement led by DESE, DEEC, and DPH in collaboration with eight other state agencies. This document has been informed by significant family and community input.
- Ongoing work on State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) for EI services with a focus on improving social and emotional well-being of children served in EI.
- Participation in the EHS-wide Preschool Development Grant to improve outcomes for children from birth to age 5.
- Participation on the State Special Education Advisory Board to share information about children with special health needs in public schools.
- Continued collaboration with the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Health to support children and youth with special health needs from culturally and linguistically underserved populations.
- Collaboration with the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), a federally mandated council that advises and assists the DPH as lead agency for the MA EI system in planning, implementation, and evaluation of EI services. The ICC is made up of family members of children who receive or have received EI, representatives from state agencies, early intervention programs, higher education, and other interested organizations serving young children and their families.
- Collaboration with MCDHH to make early connections for families with children diagnosed with hearing loss.
- Participation in the Massachusetts Children's Vision Health Advisory Committee.

- Support for the Autism Insurance Resource Center at the UMass Medical School's Shriver Center.
- Regular collaboration with the Coordinated Case Management Program at MassHealth.
- Participation in Essentials for Childhood, a public-private partnership with the Children's Trust Fund, EEC, Department of Children and Families, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and business that promotes social-emotional well-being and creating safe, stable and nurturing environments for young children.
- Participation on Young Children's Council, a public/private council that advises the Division of Pregnancy, Infancy, and Early Childhood (PIE) on social connectedness.
- Participation in a WIC Developmental Monitoring Program funded by CDC.
- Participation on the Steering Committee of the Statewide Family Engagement Grant at the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

*New Initiatives:*

- Participation in release and implementation of [Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement Framework](#).
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to identify challenges and solutions for implementation to include those raised by the COVID-19 pandemic and structural racism.
- Work with the Office of the Child Advocate and MassHealth around all aspects of emergency care planning.
- Collaboration with the Department of Developmental Services and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission around Charting the LifeCourse work.