

HB1760 (2025) Early Intervention (EI) Screening Workgroup

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services & Department of Education

Monday, July, 28 2025 | 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Minutes – Meeting Three

Welcome and Workgroup Overview

Kari Savage, DBHDS

Mrs. Savage welcomed workgroup members and reviewed the workgroup charge and timeline. She also shared a menti link to collect responses from stakeholders to the question “when you think of the key audience for training related to early childhood mental health, who come to mind”.

Infant and Toddler Behavior Consultation (ITBC), Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN)

Dawn Wimbush, Child Development Resources

Ms. Wimbush provided an overview of the history of the Infant and Toddler Behavior Consultation (ITBC) program. She identified the objectives of the program to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions, promote healthy SE development, address challenging behavior, and prevent suspension and expulsion of children from early childhood programs. Ms. Wimbush then reviewed eligibility requirements for participation in the program. Participants include subsidized childcare sites serving birth to three whose CLASS scores fall within a program defined priority range, children demonstrating social emotional concerns, behavior challenges, and/or facing suspension/expulsion, and families of children needing child-specific coaching. She highlighted the core components of the coaching, training, and technical assistance services provided by the program. In her review of services she provided information on types of screenings used, the screening process, and use of screening data as well as a detailed review of competencies covered in trainings. Ms. Wimbush concluded by noting barriers including turn over and shortages of staff at childcare sites and limited provider workforce to accept referrals for therapeutic services, and challenges identifying qualified providers.

Group Discussion & Recommendation Development

Kari Savage, DBHDS

Mrs. Savage presented ideas for workgroup recommendations and the workgroup discussed and provided feedback. The language presented and key takeaways from workgroup discussion are provided below.

- Request funding for DBHDS to complete a landscape analysis of existing family navigation resources to develop a plan and identify necessary resources needed to create a centralized point of contact for supporting families of children birth to five with emotional and behavioral challenges and connecting them to services.
 - Stakeholders expressed support and emphasized that it would be especially beneficial for children who are not eligible for Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and are at risk of being expelled from preschool.
- Seek resources and approval to shift DBHDS infant and early childhood mental health coordinator position from federal grant funding to state funding to support long-term stability in the position and ensure coordination and statewide awareness of new and existing programs and resources that support children birth to five with emotional and behavioral challenges and their families.
 - Workgroup members affirmed the continued need for the infant and early childhood mental health coordinator position and were supportive of taking action to maintain access to resources to support it.
- Identify resources to expand previous landscape analysis to better understand expertise in infant and early childhood mental health including training experiences/ needs and use of screening and assessment tools in Virginia, including 1) publicly funded sites, 2) home visiting programs, 3) medical/ pediatricians.
 - Stakeholders discussed limitations of prior research and the need for more participants in surveys and interviews. There was general support for the proposal to expand the scope of analysis as described and seek more participation from providers working in the field.
- Request funding for DBHDS to support connection to and financial resources for professional development and training for early childhood education providers, early intervention providers, home visitors and health care providers, and families to support children birth to five with emotional and behavioral challenges (e.g., develop a training finder, funding to increase the number of PD and training offerings, funding to support provider and family participation, etc.)
 - Workgroup members suggested adding a focus on identifying training opportunities for cross-sector development to support professionals from different service types learning from one another.

Members also discussed models in other states for data sharing between service providers and emphasized a need for analysis of the capacity of the Virginia mental health workforce specializing in infant and early childhood mental health. Stakeholders discussed prior research identifying options for expanding workforce capacity to support this population that focused on how the services are funded and billed through health insurance.

Next Steps & Closing Remarks

Kari Savage, DBHDS

Ms. Savage concluded the meeting noting that the next workgroup meeting will be hosted virtually on Monday August 25 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Workgroup members are encouraged to continue adding comments to the padlet in the interim.

Workgroup enactment language:

§ 1. That the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of Education shall convene a work group of relevant stakeholders, including Department of Education employees focused on school readiness, representatives of the Medical Society of Virginia, representatives of Training and Technical Assistance Centers as deemed appropriate, and any other appropriate stakeholders, to develop a plan to (i) create a mental health screening and assessment tool to assist with early identification of mental health issues for children in early childhood care and education settings that focuses on early detection, intervention, and support for emotional and behavioral challenges in children five years of age or younger and (ii) provide mental health consultation resources and training to early childhood education providers, pediatric health care providers, and families. The work group shall report its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations by November 1, 2025.