



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Washington DCYF Prevention Framework

May 2026



Agenda & Objectives for Today

- **Trace the evolution of DCYF's Prevention Framework**

Highlight the historical context, milestones and the agency's motivations for developing a unified approach.

- **Build a shared understanding of what a prevention framework is and why it matters**

Clarify the definition, purpose and value of a prevention framework so all participants are aligned in language and intent.

- **Increase visibility into current prevention efforts across DCYF**

Showcase existing initiatives and efforts across DCYF to support prevention efforts across the continuum.

- **Gather participant insights to shape the next phase of the framework**

Engage attendees in reflection and input gathering that will directly inform and strengthen the framework's development



Introductions

Erinn Havig, MSW

*Senior Advisor – Washington State
Foster America*

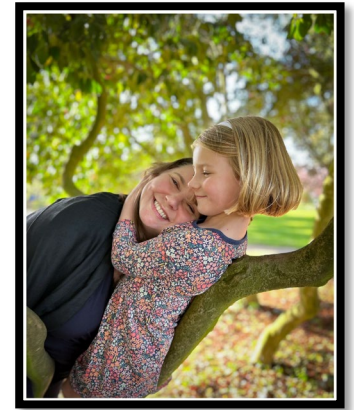
“At each stage of my life, I have thought I understood how to support families and knew how the child welfare system worked. I am consistently surprised and want to help our state and communities to work together, as far upstream as we can while learning with our families and communities.”



Maria Zdzieblowski, MSW, LICSW

*Director of Service Continuum
Division of Partnership Prevention & Services at DCYF*

“With 19 years of experience, and a personal history that fuels my passion, I’ve learned that children thrive when families are supported, not separated. Prevention invites us to show up for families before challenges become crises, and to build a system rooted in care rather than correction.”



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Context for DCYF's Prevention Framework

Washington State Context

- The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) was established in 2017 to bring together child welfare, early learning, and juvenile rehabilitation into a more unified approach to supporting children, youth & families.
- The agency is continuing to evolve toward a system that prioritizes family well-being and reducing unnecessary system involvement.

A Broad and Evolving Prevention Landscape

- Across DCYF and its partners, prevention shows up in many ways —from supporting family well-being, to preventing harm, to reducing system involvement.
- These efforts span a continuum and are often experienced differently across teams, programs, and communities.
- Prevention is already happening across DCYF and partner systems —this framework helps us better see and connect that work.

Opportunity for Alignment

- Today, prevention is understood and described in different ways across the agency. This can make it harder to see how work connects—and to communicate a shared direction.
- This creates an opportunity to:
 - ◆ Bring greater clarity to how prevention is understood and communicated
 - ◆ Connect work happening across different parts of the agency
 - ◆ Ensure alignment between internal strategy and external messaging

“Different parts of our agency view prevention differently... it looks really different.”

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Purpose of the Prevention Framework

- Establish a clear, shared way of describing prevention that reflects the full scope of DCYF's work
- Framework = “A supporting structure of system of ideas that provides a foundation for building, organizing, or guiding something.”
- Provide a tool to:
 - ◆ Align teams internally around how their prevention work is connected
 - ◆ Communicate externally why this work matters and how it supports families
 - ◆ Remain broad and flexible—grounded in what DCYF can do, while making space for multiple perspectives and approaches
- At its core, this work is about ensuring families can access the support they want and need.
- Connect and make visible the prevention work already happening across the agency and with partners

What would it look like to see yourself and your work reflected in a DCYF Prevention Framework?

Across conversations, there is strong alignment on the need for a framework that is flexible, inclusive, and grounded in community. Common themes include:

- Maintaining space for different definitions of prevention
- Including culturally respectful and relevant practices
- Prevention is built on trust, relationships, and community connection—not just programs or services.

“There would be flexibility and space to allow for decolonized views and practices of prevention”

Encompass “our different definitions of prevention and what we are preventing”

“I would personally feel represented in a framework that makes space for ‘promotional factors’ as a part of prevention”

“Families feeling heard and seen...it’s not an outcome we can track, but it makes a huge difference..”

What would it look like to see yourself and your work reflected in a DCYF Prevention Framework?

“Knowing that my work is sustainable and building a solid foundation for our state’s families would be important. Not having sustainability in our prevention efforts is frustrating and harmful to our communities.”

“Prevention begins with relationships — building trust so families and Tribes feel heard, valued, and able to define success on their own terms. It means engaging Tribes early and consistently, not as an afterthought.”

“I’m wondering about how families and community respond to the word prevention. Does it carry some baggage?”

“We promote concrete supports as a way to reduce family stress and support well-being.”

The “how” is as important as the process... so giving some spotlight and weight to the how, including system and resource navigation.

“I would need to see the agency embracing prevention and recognizing DCYF is a prevention entity.”

*Let's
pause to
zoom out
for a
moment*

SAMHSA Strategic Prevention Framework



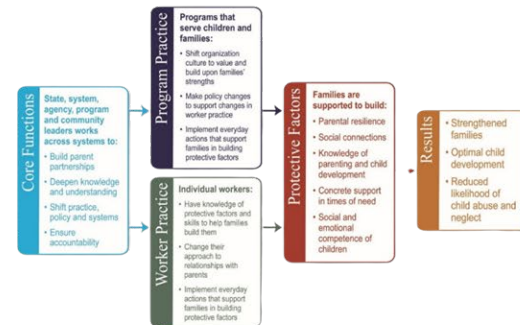
Framework for Pretrial Justice



Child Safety Framework (Gather, Plan, Analyze, Assess)

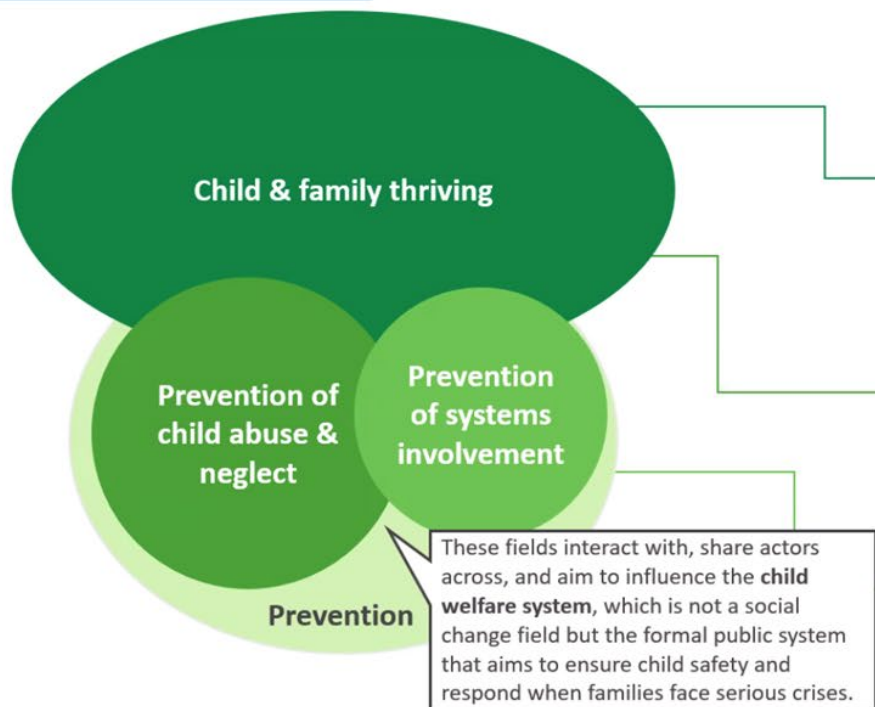


CSSP Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework



The Bridgespan Group's Assessment of the Prevention Field: Defining Three Related —but Distinct —Sub-Fields

FIELD ASSESSMENT



Definitions¹

Child & family thriving:

The set of actors and efforts ensuring **all children and families have the supports and services they need to be financially secure and to sustain their health, well-being, and happiness**. This includes the intersecting systems — education, health, housing, economic justice, and criminal justice — that collectively shape whether families are thriving, at risk, or in crisis.

Prevention of child abuse & neglect:

The set of actors and efforts working to **ensure child safety by addressing specific threats or vulnerabilities** that put a child at high risk of abuse or neglect, including preventing additional harm that may occur within the child welfare system itself.

Prevention of systems involvement:

The set of actors and efforts working to **shrink the child welfare system** by decreasing the number of families who enter the system unnecessarily or who need additional supports to prevent further systems involvement. Aims to reshape how the system responds when families are in situations that could lead to formal system entry or deeper involvement.

Note: 1. While there is some overlap here with the primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention framework, that language does not fully match the intended definitions of these fields.

How to Read This Framework

- Prevention happens across a continuum —not in one program or moment
- Different teams may see their work in different parts of the continuum
- All parts of the work are connected and necessary
- This framework helps us see how our work fits together

This framework is not about choosing one definition of prevention—it's about understanding how different parts of the work connect.

DCYF Prevention & Well-Being Framework

Prevention Through Relationship, Culture, and Community

CORE STATEMENT:

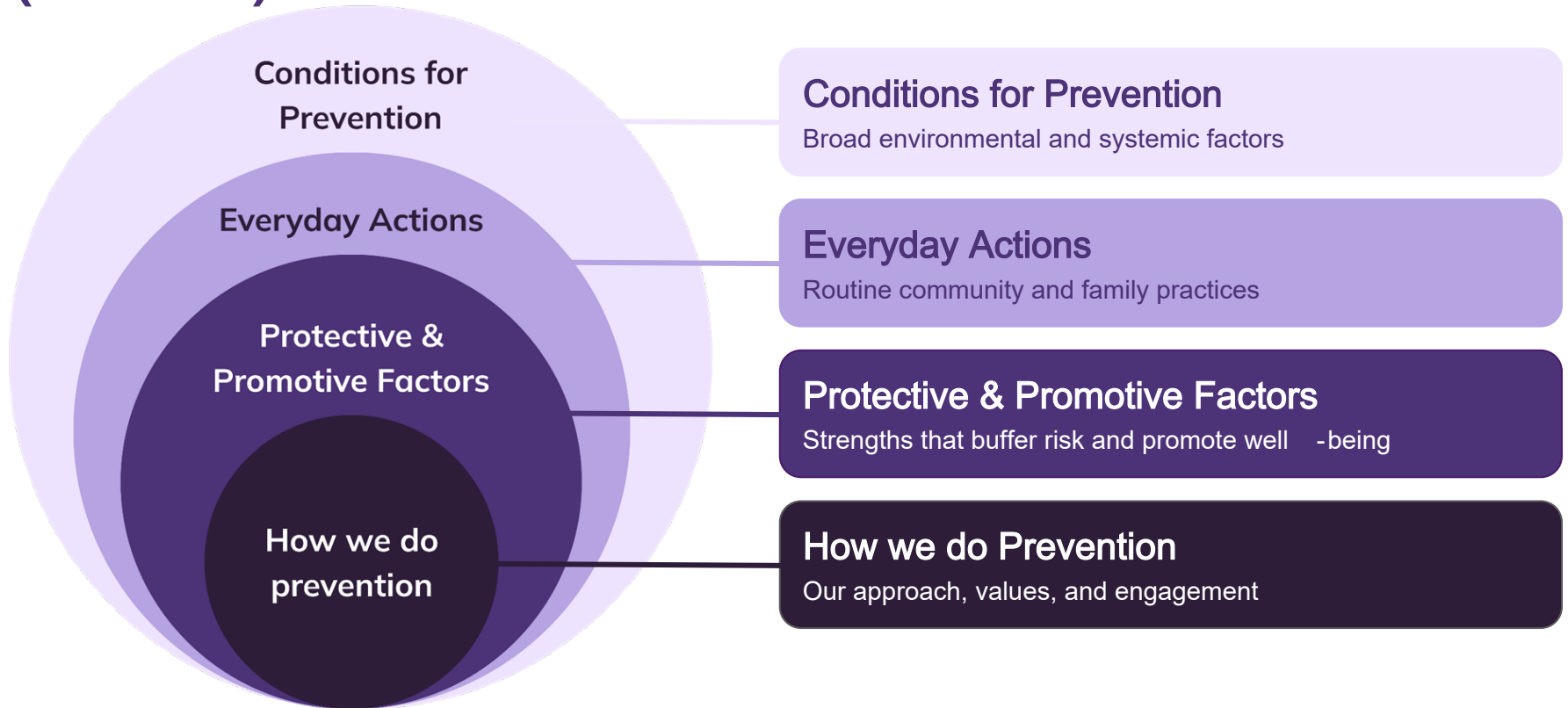
DCYF has a mandate to increase access to prevention services (HB 1661) in the course of doing work. DCYF provides intervention as well as prevention services.

Prevention Includes:

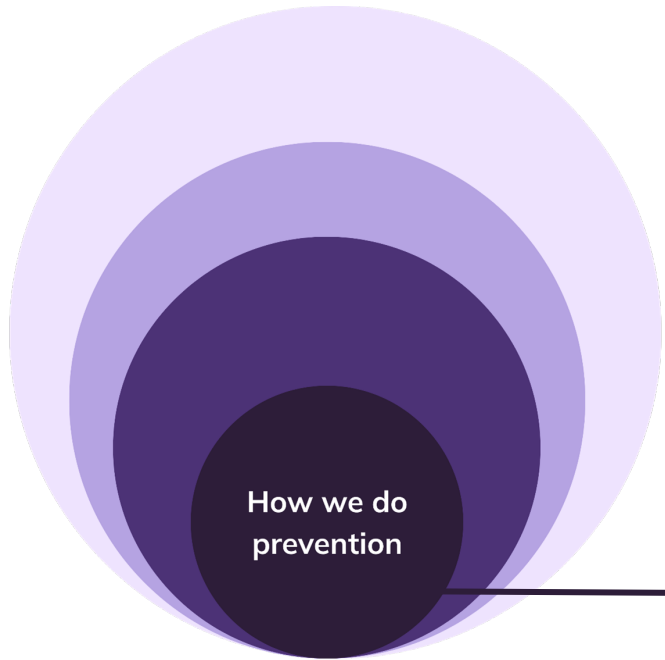
- Reducing harm and adversity
- Promoting well-being and positive outcomes
- Strengthening family-trusted systems to support families being successful on their own terms

Ultimately, prevention means supporting families at each step of the way to address needs and reduce later involvement with more intensive levels of care.

The Washington Prevention Framework (DRAFT)



How we do prevention matters



Relational first

Trust, listening, and partnership

Equity & Decolonization

Center Tribal sovereignty, culture and lived experiences

Community -Led Success

Communities define their own success and well -being

Promotion + Prevention

Increase focus beyond preventing something awful to include increasing joy, stability, belonging, and wellness

Sustainability

Long-term commitment , resources, and aligned efforts

2nd Layer: Protective & Promotive Factors

Rooted in the CSSP Protective Factors Framework and expanded to include our broader scope

Families & Caregivers

- Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports and system navigation
- Knowledge of child/youth development
- Hope, joy, and cultural identity

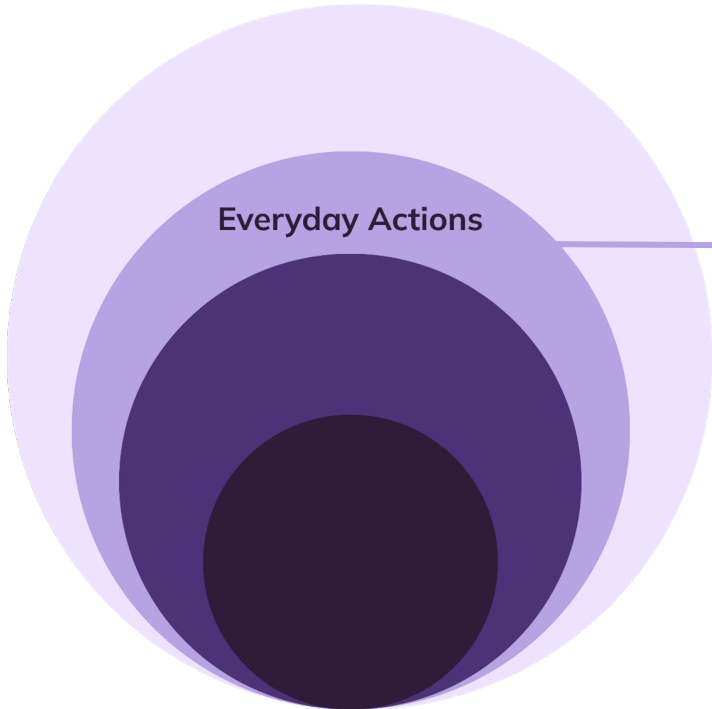
Children & Youth

- Safe, stable, nurturing relationships
- Social-emotional competence
- High-quality early learning and care
- Belonging and positive experiences

Communities & Systems

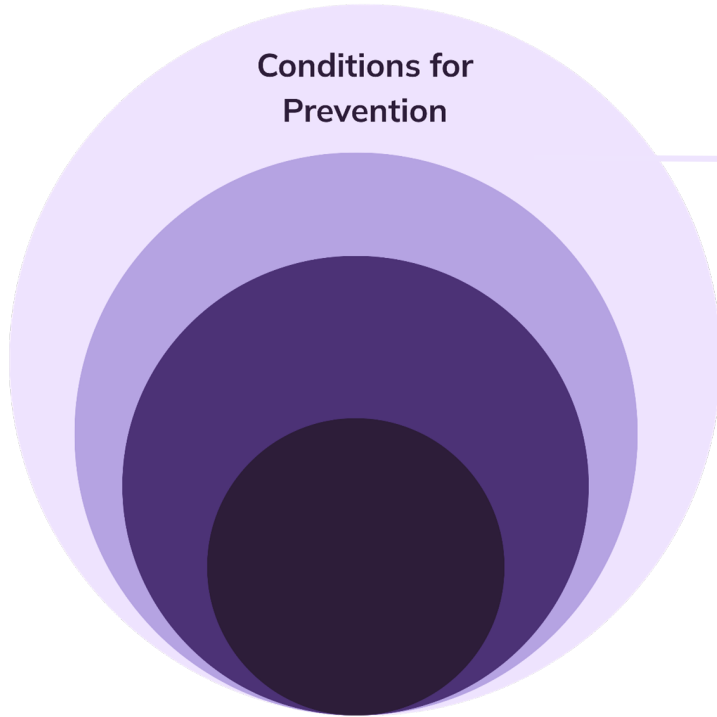
- Trusted relationships with agencies and communities
- Accessible, coordinated services
- All actions build on cultural strengths and leadership

3rd Layer: Everyday Actions



- Build and sustain relationships
- Support families in navigating systems
- Partner with Tribes early and often
- Advance the ELCP and partnership on positive early childhood experiences
- Collaborate across programs and communities
- Learn, reflect, and adapt with families

Conditions for Prevention



- Align policy, funding, and practice
- Early and ongoing Tribal engagement
- Community -led solutions
- Advance the ELCP and partnership on positive early childhood experiences
- Collaborate across programs and communities
- Learn, reflect, and adapt with families

The Washington Prevention Framework (DRAFT)



Conditions for Prevention: Broad environmental and systemic factors

- Align policy, funding, and practice
- Collaborate across programs and communities
- Early and ongoing Tribal engagement
- Learn, reflect, and adapt with families
- Community-led solutions

Everyday Actions: Routine community and family practices

- Build and sustain relationships
- Collaborate across programs and communities
- Support families in navigating systems
- Learn, reflect, and adapt with families
- Partner with Tribes early and often

Families & Caregivers

- Resilience
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Children & Youth

- Safe, stable, nurturing relationships
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Communities & Systems

- Trusted relationships with agencies and communities
- Accessible, coordinated services
- All actions build on cultural strengths and leadership

How we do Prevention: Our approach, values, and engagement

- **Relational first** (Trust, listening, and partnership)
- **Equity + Decolonization** (Center Tribal sovereignty, culture and lived experiences)
- **Community-Led Success** (Communities define their success and well-being too)
- **Promotion + Prevention** (Increase focus beyond preventing something awful to include increasing joy, stability, belonging and wellness)
- **Sustainability** (Long term, resources, aligned efforts, commitment)

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Showcase existing initiatives and efforts across DCYF to support prevention efforts across the continuum.



Input & Reflections

How would a DCYF Prevention Framework influence/impact the work you do?

What's missing from this draft framework?

What are the opportunities you see for DCYF to use this framework well?



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Prevention Work at DCYF

- Basic Needs Pilot
- Positive Indian Parenting
- Prevention in JR
- Grow the Green
- Juvenile Court Prevention
- Washington Fatherhood Council
- Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)
- Family First Prevention Services Act
- Home Visiting Services
- Case Closure referral to Community Care Hub Pilots
- Help Me Grow
- New Prevention Services
- Plan of Safe Care Community Pathway
- Child Welfare Early Learning Navigators (CWELN)
- Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT)
- Career Connected Pathways (CCP)
- Educational Training Voucher (ETV)
- Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team (YYAART)



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Prevention Work at DCYF

→ Basic Needs Support Services Pilot

Primary Goal: Contract with five (5) Community Agencies to pilot the delivery of basic needs support services to families involved in Child Welfare. Goal is to help alleviate immediate financial hardships and support family basic needs support goals and strengthen access to services.

Service Delivery will include:

- Basic needs assessment and goal development
- Bi-Weekly check ins
- Resource navigation & connection
- Distribution of material goods and service payments

Up to 5 Month
Service Period

\$2,000 cap per
client

Hybrid Service
Delivery Model

For More Information Contact Email: [Jesse Stigile](#)
[Basic Needs Community Resource Directory](#)

→ Positive Indian Parenting

Service Overview: 8–10-week parent program serving Native families with children Birth to 18. Draws on the strengths of traditional child-rearing practices and addresses the historic impact of boarding schools, intergenerational trauma, grief and forced assimilation of parenting practices while empowering Native families to reclaim their right to their heritage to be positive parents. Highly utilized program by Tribes across Washington State with many Tribes trained in the curriculum and offering the program in their communities. Both DCYF & Tribes can refer to families to these services across the state.

8 providers across the state (Tulalip, Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation, Samish Indian Nation, Lummi Nation, Totem Family Services, The Patrick Group, Volunteers of America Western Washington, American Indian Community Center)

For More Information Contact Email: [Tessa Velasco](#)
[Positive Indian Parenting Introductory Video](#)
[Positive Indian Parenting Training](#)

For DCYF Staff making referrals – [intranet site](#)

Prevention Work at DCYF



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→ Prevention in JR

Medications for Opioid Use Disorders (MOUD)

Connect young people to medication therapy and case management to prevent fatal opioid overdoses

For More Information Contact: [Troy Wasmundt, RN](#)

CPR/Narcan Training

Certify residents in life-saving CPR & Narcan skills – 250+ youth trained in 3 years, all released with Narcan

For More Information Contact: [Troy Wasmundt, RN](#)

Housing Supports/Homeless Prevention

Provide direct financial housing assistance and community partnership to ensure stable housing upon exit from JR care.

For More Information Contact: [Lauresa Hart](#), Community Transitions Administrator

Positive Outcomes Through Supported Transitions (POST Program)

Evidenced-Based program engaging youth 2 months pre-release through 6 months post-release to increase the likelihood of substance use reduction and abstinence.

For More Information Contact: [Steve Cordero](#), POST Project

Educational & Vocational Programs

Provide K-12, college coursework, and hands-on vocational training to prepare youth for employment and continued academics

For More Information Contact: [Gerdon Jones](#), Education Administrator

→ Grow the Green

Data Literacy effort led by OIAA

- Utilizes the OIAA Safe Reduction Dashboard by making child welfare data easily understandable and useful to community decision making
- To 'Grow the Green' means to prevent out of home placement and re-referrals of a child over 120 days after the initial case closes.
- Foster America has been supporting Parent Advisory Group members in developing a learning arc about using the data.
- DCYF and Foster America are partnering with two communities in the coming months to learn how this approach could work in practice.

For more information, Contact: [Doug Klinman](#) and come check out our table near Registration!



Prevention Work at DCYF

➔ Juvenile Court – Evidenced Based Programs

Coordination of Services (COS)

12-hour seminar for low-risk youth and a parent/supportive adult. Sessions are provided by community organizations and cover key life skills and youth development topics.

Offered in 12 courts | 14 providers statewide

Education & Employment Training (EET)

For moderate/high-risk youth. Combines education, employment development, and work experience to reduce recidivism and increase protective factors.

Offered in 42 courts | 31 providers statewide

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

12-16 sessions for moderate/high-risk youth. Improves family communication, reduces conflict, and builds long-term stability.

Offered in 23 courts | 32 providers statewide

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

Intensive, family and community-based treatment for high-risk youth with serious behavioral issues. Goal of reducing recidivism and improving functioning at home and in school

Offered in 1 courts | 3 providers statewide

➔ Juvenile Court – Promising Program

Alternative Choice Training (ACT)

For moderate/high-risk youth. Builds problem-solving, emotional regulation, and reduces cognitive distortions. By addressing these factors ACT seeks to reduce recidivism.

Offered in 17 courts | 38 providers statewide

➔ Juvenile Court – Disposition Alternatives

Option B / Suspended Disposition Alternative (SDA) [RCW 13.40.0357](#)

Allows the court to suspend a standard-range sentence and place eligible youth on community supervision in lieu of confinement, focused on rehabilitation

Chemical Dependency/Mental Health Disposition Alt. [RCW 13.40.165](#)

Ensures youth with substance use, mental health, or co-occurring disorder receive treatment and community supervision in lieu of confinement.

Special Sex Offender Disposition Alternative (SSODA) [RCW 13.40.162](#)

Provides eligible first-time youth sex offenders an intensive outpatient treatment and community supervision alternative to confinement, aimed at reducing recidivism and protecting public safety.

Prevention Work at DCYF



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→ Washington Fatherhood Council

A collaborative group focused on reducing poverty and inequality through increased fatherhood access and belonging. The council provides support to improve state services, connects dads to resources, and makes sure that fathers with lived experience are part of everything they do.

Council Goals:

- Increase awareness of the essential role father's play in child and family well-being
- Promote father-friendly policies and practices to increase child and family well-being
- Promote equitable resources for fathers and families

Go Check out the Fatherhood Council CJC Booth!

For More Information Contact Email: [Strengthening Families Washington Fatherhood Council](#)

→ Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

CBCAP programs were established by Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (CAPTA).

At DCYF we have implemented the Strengthening Families approach, which is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. DCYF utilizes this approach to support, foster, and build the [five protective factors](#) in communities and organizations alongside our strongest partners – parents. Past collaborative opportunities include selecting community programs to be funded, assisting in developing project ideas and participating in Unsung Heroes and Pinwheels for Prevention events.

For More Information Contact Email: [Strengthening Families Strengthening Families Washington DCYF Website](#)

Prevention Work at DCYF



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→ Family First Prevention Services Act

Federal child welfare law that passed in 2018 that allows federal funding to support prevention services to prevent the need for out of home care.

Goal of implementation efforts in WA state are to strengthen families early on and reduce unnecessary child welfare intakes and placements. Community based pathways will provide services to families without an open child welfare case. The Administration of Children & Families (ACF) requires data be captured and reported upon for any family accessing prevention services. DCYF is currently building pathways and contracts to be in alignment with this new federal funding source.

For More Information Contact Email: [Family First DCYF Website](#)

→ Home Visiting

Home visiting programs are voluntary, family-focused services offered to expectant parents and families with new babies and young children to support the physical, social, and emotional health of a child.

Either before a child's birth or the child's first few years of life, families are voluntarily matched with trained professionals. These home visitors engage families in their homes or community settings to provide information and support related to children's healthy development, support parent-child relationships, and provide information on importance of early learning and connections to other information, services and supports in the community.

For more information Contact Email [DCYF Home Visiting DCYF Home Visiting Website](#)
[Home Visiting Models](#)
[Home Visiting At-A-Glance](#)
[Home Visiting Data One Pager](#)
[Services by County](#)



Prevention Work at DCYF

→ Case Closure referral to Community Care Hub Pilots

Region 4 — The King Southeast (KSE) office is piloting a community-based referral pathway where families involved in CPS or FVS cases can receive warm hand-off referrals to [Help Me Grow Washington](#) at case closure. This resource network, also a contracted case manager of the [Healthier Here Community Care Hub](#), connects families to essential community-based supports and offers extended case management beyond system involvement. By streamlining the transition, caseworkers can focus on addressing safety and risk while ensuring families continue to access needed services in the community.

For More Information Contact Email [Alissa Copeland](#) or [Sarah Holdener](#)

Region 1 — DCYF is partnering with **Family Impact Network (FIN)** to test a six-month program designed to connect child welfare involved parents and caregivers with critical community services. Starting January 2026, DCYF Social Workers, Supervisors, and/or Regional Program staff will determine when a referral to community resources is appropriate, either during open cases or at case closure and connect with FIN utilizing a secure portal who then couriers the information to the community care hub [Better Health Together \(BHT\)](#). BHT engages families and matches referrals to community-based organizations offering care coordination across health and social service sectors. The pilot will serve families in Spokane, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Orielle, Lincoln, and Adams counties, as well as the Kalispel, Spokane, and Colville tribal reservations.

For More Information Contact Email [Jessica Curry](#)

→ Help Me grow

[Help Me Grow](#) Washington (HMG) is the only evidence-based **early childhood** System Model that connects parents and caregivers to resources in their community.

It is a **free** statewide service that connects parents/caregivers to a wealth of resources existing within their communities, either by phone or online. Many navigators are bilingual and all of them have immediate access to interpreters

Last year, Help Me Grow Washington responded to more than 16,900 requests for support across Washington State.

For More Information DCYF Contact Email: [Minnette Mason](#)

[Help Me Grow Brief](#)

[Help Me grow Essential Services](#)

Resource Hotline: 1-800-322-2588 or [Online Search](#)



Prevention Work at DCYF

→ New Prevention Service Contracts

Funding was provided during the last legislative session to support targeted prevention support services to 5 high needs areas across the state. This additional funding was because of [DCYF's Decision Package Request](#). Although not all requested supports were provided in the legislative budget, DCYF will implement and/or coordinate the following additional prevention supports. Implementation Planning is currently underway with new contracts starting in early 2027.

- Increase availability of the **Parent-Child Assistance Program** (PCAP) slots (32 additional slots)
- Improve parent child attachment and infant/maternal mental health through **Public Health Nurses**
- Increase community-based support for families post child welfare case closure with **Family Resource Centers**
- Expansion of **Plan of Safe Care Community pathway**

For More Information Contact Emails:

[Plan of Safe Care](#)

PCAP Program & Public Health Nurse Contracts – [Jennifer Helseth](#)

Family Resource Center Contracts – [Susana Lopez](#)

→ Plan of Safe Care Community Pathway

A Plan of Safe Care (POSC) is a family-centered prevention plan designed for birthing parents and their infants with prenatal substance exposure. [Federal legislation changes](#) increased the number of infants requiring a POSC. In addition to illegal substances, it now includes infants experiencing prenatal substance exposure to any substance with abuse potential, including some prescribed medications.

In [June 2023](#) DCYF updated their program, policies and procedures for screening and responding to calls from mandated reporters on infants born prenatally exposed to substances. A new referral pathway was created so infants born substance exposed without safety concerns can receive voluntary wrap around services from a community organization, [Help Me Grow](#).

The POSC community of practice is a monthly meeting occurring on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 2-3p. The goal is to facilitate a space for networking, relevant training topics, presentations, and discussions for the community of professionals involved in the POSC body of work. To attend a Community of Practice email: HMGWA@withinreachwa.org

For More Information Contact Email: [Plan of Safe Care](#)

[Plan of Safe Care DCYF Website](#)

[Plan of Safe Care E-Learning](#)

[Plan of Safe Care Online Portal for Birthing Hospital Staff](#)

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→ Child Welfare Early Learning Navigators (CWELN)

DCYF navigator staff who hold expertise in both the child welfare and early learning systems work alongside families and child welfare caseworkers to ensure interested families are successfully referred and start early learning supportive programs. CWELNs proactively identify and reach out to families to assess early learning needs and match them with a service in their community.

12 CWELNs are embedded across all six regions, serving 22 offices. Expansion planning is underway to add 3 additional staff.

Go Check out the **CWELN CJC Booth!**

For More Information Contact Email: [Megan Tady](#), CWELN Program Manager

[CWELN Article](#)

For DCYF Staff- [intranet site](#)

[External DCYF CWELN Webpage](#)

→ Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT)

The Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program gives early help to children from birth to age 3 who have developmental delays or disabilities, as well as their families.

The goal is to help children stay active in daily family life and grow so they can thrive in their early years and in the future. Children and their families can receive services in:

- Their Homes
- Childcare Centers
- Preschools or school programs or
- Their Communities

For More Information Contact Email: [ESIT Program Staff](#)
[ESIT DCYF Website](#)

[A Family's Guide to Early Intervention Services in WA State](#)
[ESIT Statewide Directory](#)

Prevention Work at DCYF



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➔ Career Connected Pathways (CPP)

Career Connected pathways helps young people find jobs and career opportunities that are the right fit for them. This includes internships, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and more.

For More Information Contact Email: [Veneza Tena](#)
[CCP DCYF Website](#)

➔ Educational Training Voucher (ETV)

The ETV program is for youth who qualify and a likely to age out of the foster care system. ETV offers money to eligible youth to attend an accredited college or vocational training program. The funds can also be used for educational training costs to support young people leaving the child welfare system.

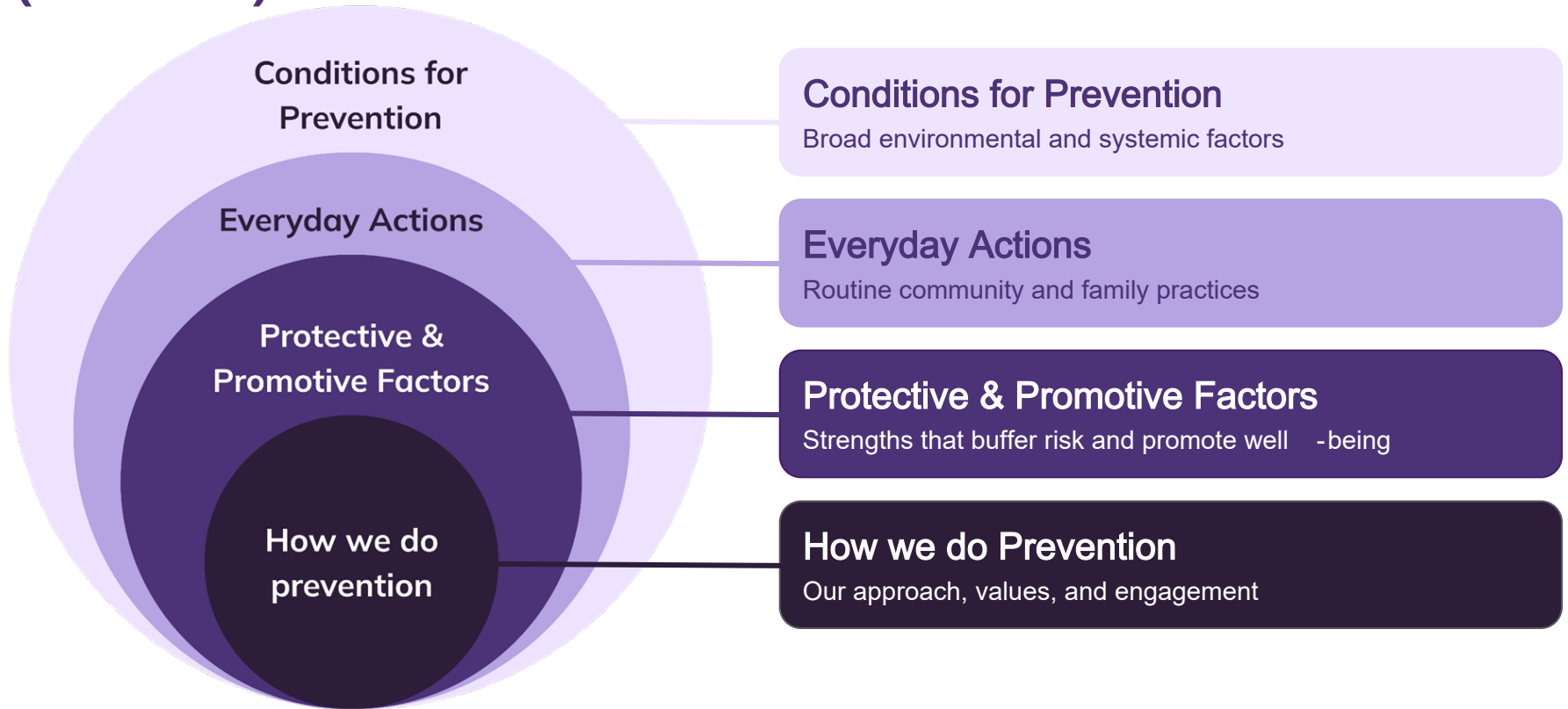
For More Information Contact Email: [Kathy Ramsay](#)
[ETV DCYF Website](#)

➔ Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team (YYAHRT)

In 2022, [HB1905](#) passed creating what is now known as the YYAHRT, an interagency team that regularly meets to triage complex cases involving young people exiting system of care experiencing or at risk for homelessness. DCYF in equal partnership with the Office of Homeless youth (OHY), Health Care Authority of WA State (HCA), and the Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) work together to respond to these young people. They coordinate resources and help them with housing while exiting any publicly funded system of care.

For More Information Contact Email: [Shannon Quinn](#)
[2024 Legislative Report](#)
[YYAHRT Brochure](#)
[YYAHRT Office Hours Flyer](#)

The Washington Prevention Framework (DRAFT)



Wrap-Up

- Take another moment to consider the Draft Prevention Framework and the questions asked earlier. Is there anything to add to your input or that you feel needs to be shared?

Reach out to us!

→ [Maria Zdziewlowski](#)

→ [Erinn Havig](#)

Come by our Prevention Connection space behind registration to continue the conversation!



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Stay Connected to Prevention Efforts at DCYF!

- [Subscribe](#) to Family First Newsletter
- [Subscribe](#) to Home Visiting Newsletter
- [Subscribe](#) to Early Support for Infants & Toddlers Family Newsletter
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