



## Michigan's Early Childhood Courts

**Meeting summary for State Advisory Group: 02/10/2025 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

### Attendees

Aarica Smith, MDHHS, Legislative Affairs
Alan Oman, ECIC (Think Babies, MI)
Alex Citrin, CSSP
Ali Cosgrove, MDHHS, BCCHPS
Amy Zaagman, MI Council for Maternal and Child Health
Andria Peek, ZTT
Angie Smith Butterwick, MDHHS BHS, Sub use, gambling and Epidemiology
Annie Heit MDHHS-HVU, Substance Use Peer Navigator
Anthony Queen, Parent Leader
Christie Spudowski, Wayne County ECC
Courtney Isanhart, MDHHS, CSA

Dawn Shanafelt, Title V, MDHHS
Elizabeth Hawrylo, CSA in-home MDHHS
Emily Mitchelson-Perez, Parent Leader
Elizabeth Henderson, MI Federation for Families
Jason Cross, ICWA state manager, MDHHS
Jodi Shinn, St. Clair County ECC
John Carey, Kinship Care, MSU
Jordan Carter, MDHHS, CPS and redesign
Kathleen Coakley, Early head start
Kelly Hurshe, Early On, MiLEAP
Kim Batsche-McKenzie, Division Director, MDHHS, BCCHPS

Maddie Elliott, Michigan's Children
Marissa Albright, MDHHS CPS & Redesign Analyst
Mary Ludtke, MDHHS, BCCHPS
Mary Lou Mahoney, Prevention, Preservation, MDHHS
Michele Hall, Statewide Coordinator, Early Childhood Courts, MDHHS, BCCHPS
Nancy Rostoni, MDHHS
Patty Neitman, Bureau Director, MDHHS, BCCHPS
Ta'Sheena Williams, MI Council for Maternal and Child Health
Tim Click, MDHHS in-home
Shadi Houshyar, CSSP

1:05 pm-Meeting convened by Project Director, Kim Batsche-McKenzie.

### ECC expansion site updates:

- *Saginaw County* implementation is on hold until new coordinator is hired and onboarded.
- *Wayne County* is interviewing for a new coordinator but will continue to see families on the docket and continue to move towards fidelity of the Safe Babies Approach. Currently 9 families are active on the docket with 4 expected reunifications. Wayne ECC continues to address docket and workforce capacity while working to establish ECC at all 3 districts.
- *St. Clair County* continues with site implementation, hosted 1<sup>st</sup> Active Community Team meeting with 30 Community members, and currently has 2 families on the docket.
- The evaluation and data team has completed the draft of the retrospective study of Wayne County Baby Court and a draft awareness video that is currently under MDHHS communication review. Both will be shared with the SAG once finalized.

### Legislative and Sustainability Work Group Update

Amy Zaagman provided updates and discussion regarding meeting with the new judiciary chair, Representative Lightner. The Representative requested a Q & A with the Wayne County jurist, coordinator, and clinician active with the work. Amy noted the legislative and sustainability workgroup has been on hold until there is a better understanding of who will support the draft bill post-election. Amy reported still identifying whether ECC belongs under problem solving or family treatment courts. Amy posed question for SAG members to explore the Governor's budget proposal for the next couple years and whether we look to seek appropriations or statutory bill at this time. More follow-ups will be done to find these answers.

**Group Discussion: Shared Vision and How our Collective Work Impacts and Supports Children and Families with Shadi Houshyar, PhD., Director of Health Justice Policy and Alexandra Citrin, Senior Associate from Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)**

- ✚ Michele led further discussion among the SAG member to begin to identify the current efforts across Michigan that supports family health and well-being. The goal is to identify the workgroups and task forces aimed at the same goals and objectives of ECC.

The group identified the following:

**Current efforts promoting healthy families and communities, fatherhood, and lived experience.**

- ✚ MI-AIMH Social Action Committee (just relaunched!) and online trainings
- ✚ Family Support Specialists assigned to all enrolled families. Regularly meet with families, home visits, parent engagement events, meetings and training.
- ✚ Think babies parent network (also has a fatherhood link)
- ✚ Michigan Child Care Provider Collective
- ✚ Think Babies Michigan parent network
- ✚ Think Babies Michigan and Michigan's Children policy priorities
- ✚ Youth Advocacy Program pairs adult professionals with lived expertise in foster care with teens in foster care to develop self-advocacy skills
- ✚ State Home Visiting Programs
- ✚ Use the voice of Parents. There are no disclosures needed!
- ✚ Zero to Thrive/Fraternity of Fathers. Peer Coaches/Advocates. Prevention programming in schools and community centers. NEAR Science/ACEs master trainers.
- ✚ Expanded access to behavioral health services through the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics
- ✚ Title V Maternal Child Health Programs & Services
- ✚ Front-end redesign initiative (prevention, CPS).
- ✚ Active engagement with Guy Thompson Parent Advisory Council (GTPAC) - group of parents with lived experience (emphasis on recruiting and retaining fathers specifically). Embedded within CPS program office/CPS & Redesign Unit.
- ✚ PRAMS for Dads
- ✚ MI Federation: Child Welfare Protective Factors Training Initiative MiFamily Together Pilot
- ✚ MSU Kinship Care Resource Center
- ✚ Maternal & Infant Health Family/Community Town Halls
- ✚ The Michigan Fatherhood Policy Group
- ✚ Regional Perinatal Quality Collaboratives

**Current Efforts in the courts, and child welfare promoting safety, prevention, and fairness within the system.**

- ✚ Put Parents on the Review Board, use their knowledge. Celebrate the Wins, let families know that the work is being done, acknowledge that their voice is being heard
- ✚ Use the voice of Doulas
- ✚ SCAO Court Improvement Program Child Welfare Services resources through the Court Improvement Program (CIP). Best practices resources: Child Protection Handbook for Parents, Foster Parent Guide to Court, Judicial Bench Cards, ongoing training.
- ✚ CPS Redesign. Contract with MPHI to overhaul mandated reporter training. Enhanced SDM safety and risk assessments. Enhanced Plan of Safe Care. Revised/enhanced human trafficking protocol.

- Prevention and preservation addressing safety, implicit bias, and disparities. Use of structured support tool in 2023, using a decision tree, poverty does not equal neglect, enhanced maltreatment types, enhanced safety and risk factors.
- ✚ Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) reviews child welfare cases randomly and by request. Statewide recommendations <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/administration/court-programs/foster-care-review-board-program/>
- ✚ Child Protective Legal Representation Task Force work and recommendations. Improve legal representation. [https://www.courts.michigan.gov/4aa286/siteassets/images/special-initiatives/child-protective-legal-representation-task-force-report\\_final.pdf](https://www.courts.michigan.gov/4aa286/siteassets/images/special-initiatives/child-protective-legal-representation-task-force-report_final.pdf)
- ✚ FFPSA and Plans of Safe Care for substance exposed infants
- ✚ Stop Overreporting Our People (STOP)
- ✚ Childcare provider collective <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1Y13qzWgyj/>

“Change will result when the family voice is used as advisement rather than mere suggestion. What is heard needs to be acted upon.” SAG Member

#### Next steps

- Michele will work to schedule individual meetings with the organizations and groups mentioned today to further develop the connected visual of our work.
- Legislative and sustainability workgroup meeting-TBD
- SAG Meeting: May 12, 2025, 1:00 pm- 2:30 pm.

**2:30 p.m.** Kim Batsche-McKenzie adjourned the meeting.

*This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number # 5 U2ZMC46639-02-00, Infant-Toddler Court Program as part of an award totaling \$2,341,847, with 0 percent financed with state government resources. This information or content and conclusions are those of MDHHS and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should an endorsement be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. government.*