

## **June 27, 2023 Family Support & Leadership Sector Discussion**

- € Tiffany began the meeting with a reaffirmation of the priorities. The agenda outlined these priorities, including the focuses and priorities from the previous session.
- € After this meeting, there will be another meeting with the Maternal and Child Health sectors. These meetings are open to anyone who wants to learn more about developments in the maternal and child health field. Tiffany encouraged members to participate.
- € Tiffany added that they could change or add to them. They will identify some of their strengths from within the core sector in Nevada, and then we will identify and propose action steps to support the priorities. The group can set some goals to work towards, and then they'll have the chance to share with a larger group. During larger meetings, this group will bring together the key sectors of family support, early childhood education, and maternal and child health.
- € During the group meeting, Tiffany presented the survey results on priorities. She asked everyone, "How do you view your work in terms of family support, direct services to families with young children and parents? Where do you think you fit in these areas of focus and priority?"
- € Ellen Richardson-Adams mentioned that she sees family leadership in priorities one and two. This is because self-advocacy for Medicaid coverage is crucial for women and children. It is important to advocate not just for oneself but also for one's children. However, there are limitations in rural communities. Having more resource-rich opportunities and connections would greatly benefit these communities. When it comes to childhood education, many people have a misconception that it's solely the responsibility of schools or childcare facilities versus someone having their child at home. However, it's essential to approach it as a holistic component that involves working with the child and their family. We need to blend both aspects to ensure the child's overall development. There is an early childhood piece at home as well.
- € Rachel mentioned that there seems to be a connection between all of them, almost like an umbrella that's on the side. However, this connection varies depending on the community and families being served, leading to natural changes over time. As someone working in the Office of Early Learning and Development, particularly with the Preschool Development grant supporting comprehensive systems, this raises important questions about how we can involve families and incorporate their voices to influence the outcomes of these priorities. Ultimately, they need to consider how to facilitate small shifts across these priorities and bring families along in the process.
- € Tiffany mentioned that all the priorities are centered around families. This is because the work being done aims to enhance the ability to serve families in Nevada, helping them thrive. The group can be likened to an umbrella, connecting various efforts towards this goal. Decision-making will include families, and all families will be represented in those discussions. These priorities can, should, and will change.
- € Tiffany responded that her first thought was DEI, mostly because she thinks parent engagement and parent leadership is the only way they will ever have services that reflect the needs of Nevada's families, and a lot of that is working toward engaging communities that are often not at the table and that requires a lot of work, and that's

something that they are all working on. She is aware of the significant efforts put forth by the Nevada Early Childhood Family Leadership Council, the PDG initiative, and the Children's Advocacy Alliance.

- € Rosa Tamayo added that Family engagement would be in with DEI and ECE.
- € Sylvia V. Henry added Workforce and DEI and said it requires meaningful engagement and partnership with families and their communities.
- € Tiffany asked the group about the most prominent examples where individuals from this primary sector collaborated or formed partnerships to work jointly in the future.
- € **What is the best support for the group to work together?**
- € Jamelle Nance shared that a crucial step is identifying a common goal or value related to family leadership that all the groups share. This can help shape policies and programs that prioritize what is best for families and involve them in the decision-making process. She emphasized the importance of understanding each team member's role and how to make referrals to each other. This helps everyone know each other's goals and how to utilize their services and expertise to meet families' needs. Building strong relationships with community-based organizations has also been valuable, as they have direct connections with families.
- € Rosa mentioned believes one would be establishing and supporting NECFLC and other parent/family-led groups.
- € April, from the Office of Minority Health and Equity, shared that their office addresses key focus areas and priorities by forming a maternal health alliance work group. During the legislative session, the group focused on passing AB 283 and SB-232 to provide Medicaid support for maternal health and postpartum care. They primarily collaborate with doulas from the Doula Co-op. These individuals work closely with our families and communities, particularly our underserved communities. She believes the collaboration between the state agency, the cooperative, and the legislators was highly effective. They are attempting to create a vetted list of cultural competency trainings for providers, which she believes was in statute. This can also be applied to Early Childhood.
- € Sylvia agreed that the most affected individuals should always be at the center of conversations to effectively find solutions to problems that affect them.
- € April can help get connected to the doula co-op.
- € Rosa Tamayo mentioned that one of the family leaders is a doula. She will ask her to see if she can join.
- € Ellen will support in re-engaging with the NICU sector.
- € The nurse provided a strong foundation for Rachel, which proved to be a crucial connection for her early childhood family. As a recipient of WIC, Rachel felt a deep sense of family support and assistance from the program. The resources and aid provided were immensely helpful.
- € During the conversation, John explained that there are certain groups that do not provide direct services but instead focus on policy work. However, organizations that do provide direct services can still assist with policy and advocacy efforts on a statewide level. John mentioned that he could communicate the important policies that require support to early childhood educators and encourage them to contact their legislators to support a family engagement bill. This would ultimately increase the advocacy efforts across the state.

- € Rosa proposed creating a list of contacts, with a focus on connecting parents to available resources. She suggested including names, contact information, and the types of resources that individuals can provide.
- € Tiffany expressed her gratitude for the chance to establish connections and partnerships. Building a stronger system requires collective effort and teamwork. She said they hope to work together to strengthen our foundations.
- € Tiffany asked about who else should be involved within this core sector.
- € April will invite doulas from the maternal and child health discussion they had previously.
- € Jamelle said they should include the business sector. She is aware that there are increasing overlaps with child care and other areas that have significant impacts on families and the workforce.
- € Rachel mentioned that the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) Communications and Engagement Subcommittee has been working on a comprehensive list of various community partners and other items for a while. Therefore, it would be helpful to consider which of those voices need representation. When it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion, it's important to consider who is missing from the discussion. She emphasized the need to include representatives from families who speak other languages. How can they ensure their voices are heard in the work?
- € Anna Villatoro recommended reaching out to the Mexican Consulate of Las Vegas, as they work with Spanish-speaking families. She mentioned that Candelen hosts a lot of events there.
- € Lela suggested having representation from the Tribal communities.
- € Tiffany pointed out that the MIECHV partners, who are involved in maternal and child health, are not part of this conversation due to their busy schedule. However, they strongly believe that their home visiting program is an integral part of the health conversation, which further emphasizes the interconnectedness of all services. They will be joining the conversation in July during the health course sector.
- € Tiffany asked about potential partnerships beyond their core sector. **While they are pursuing great partnerships within their sector, she is curious whether there are any examples of their family support and leadership work intersecting with agencies outside their sector. What are examples of this?**
- € Robin Kincaid mentioned that Nevada's Early Invention program is similar to the experience families often have in NICUs, where they gain education and build relationships. This program provides families with their first opportunity to engage in such a setting. Additionally, she believes that a program similar to Family Ties, which unfortunately is no longer available, could be beneficial for families with children with high or social healthcare needs. Maternal Child and Health provides funding through UCEDD (not sure of spelling), so perhaps a program through UCEDD could also work with these families.
- € Vivian Bolanos added to include Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities.
- € Jamelle mentioned that housing is a major area of focus for the Pritzker Children's Initiative. They have a connection with Schoolhouse Connection, which works with a community-based organization called Family Promise. Their mission is to assist families

with children, and although it's not directly within our sector, we rely heavily on partnerships to address their needs and determine necessary policy.

- € Jamelle brought up the issue of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. This is an area that isn't discussed frequently, but it's important to include in their conversations. By including it, they can improve their advocacy efforts in these areas.
- € Rachel also mentioned Sylvia Henry on the call with the new Association for Infant Early Childhood Mental Health. She also wanted to bring up mental health support and services for families in general.
- € Sylvia suggested the idea of creating a resource list through Nevada's association. This would allow members to easily access and connect with one another. Sylvia expressed enthusiasm for building this association and supporting its members in their work. She has noticed a recurring need for a space where members can come together to discuss their work and collaborate. She looks forward to engaging with fellow members to make this idea a reality. Link to Membership Committee Info Sessions | Nevada Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health:  
<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/COME-GROW-WITH-US-.html?soid=1105167973287&aid=xB7XSmsqF5E>
- € Rosa mentioned the four topics the parent leaders created.
  - Holistic Women's Health, including mental health and maternal health topic. It's essential to take care of oneself before taking care of children.
  - Workforce or resources for single moms or stay-at-home parents. Many family leaders with young children or children with special needs face numerous barriers when trying to enter the workforce.
  - Bilingual support or resources for English capacity building.
  - Supporting developmental milestones and anything that they can provide for them.
- € Lela informed that grant funds were available, and they issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to local organizations serving underserved populations. They aimed to include people from the north, south, and rural communities. As a result, they collaborated with five community-based organizations, including three in Southern Nevada: Sunrise Children's Foundation, REACH, and Obodo Collective. In the rural, they are working with Community Chest. In Reno, they have a Black Wall Street, and they work with the homeless population, but they also have a lot of mentoring for youth. She explained how they partner by providing a comprehensive early childhood training series. This series teaches about various types of support and services for families with young children. Often, these organizations lack a proper understanding of how to support this age range, covering issues such as food insecurity, housing, mental health, and others. However, they provide this service and offer many resources to help these organizations refer families, and they were very careful in selecting who was providing the training. This ensures they have a warm handoff when their clients need help accessing these resources.
- € The Children's Cabinet is working on expanding its Vroom program, which provides parent education on how to build their child's brain through everyday experiences. They have trained health and wellness professionals, including those at Sunrise Hospital in Southern Nevada and a few groups in the North. The Mind in the Making pieces of

training they offer focuses on early childhood education and how every experience can positively impact a child's brain development. This training is available to pediatricians, nurses, front desk personnel, and anyone interacting with families. The Children's Cabinet plans to meet with the Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics next to further their efforts.

- € During the discussion, Tiffany brought up the Early Childhood Community Health Worker Program. Community health workers usually work on the front line of health care. However, the state of Nevada took a different approach by focusing on the early childhood setting within communities. As part of this program, early childhood community health workers will collaborate with childcare providers, licensed centers, family, friend, and neighbor providers, as well as family childcare homes. They provide these providers with health education, resources, and referrals. They will then take on these families as clients and provide support by connecting them with health resources within their community that match their individual needs.
- € Tiffany asked the group, **"What are our most pressing needs when it comes to connecting with other core sectors? Does anyone have any ideas on what hasn't been done in this area yet?"**
- € Anna mentioned housing being a basic need for families.
- € During a discussion about connecting families to childcare programs and services, Rachel suggested that the group reach out to them through their existing communication channels. This includes family, friend, and neighbor care, as well as informal care settings. They should welcome their input without overwhelming them and respect their time. Additionally, they need to consider compensation and providing additional support. Her observation is that this group should focus on connecting with families where they already gather, whether it's through personal or professional organizations, social networks, or social media. She also mentioned that on the organizational side, it is important to understand the group's communication styles and the communication preferences of families in order to provide information and resources efficiently and effectively.
- € Alberto mentioned that he and Rachel regularly discuss the communication aspect, which is a challenging task. The main difficulty lies in making it easier for families to access information and services. Often, such resources are scattered across various locations, making it challenging to find the right service. This bouncing back and forth between different areas to locate services can be tedious. He also added that sometimes, there may be a lack of coordination when scheduling events or information sessions, with multiple opportunities on the same day. This can result in competition for the same audience and a missed chance to share valuable information.
- € Tiffany explained that by creating a comprehensive early childhood system, they hope to align with the work they are doing, including the Health Resources and Services Administration grant and PDG work. This is an exciting development as it is something she thinks about often and they are making progress towards their goal. She discussed collaborating efforts with Jamel and Shelly, who were both on the call. She believes they should work together more often and hopes to facilitate further opportunities for discussion. She also wants to involve our partners at the public health department, Nevada PEP, and the home visiting program. Although it may seem like there is



competition, there isn't because parents have unique needs that must be met in different ways. Rachel's earlier point ties into this as well.

- € Tiffany asked if anyone had considered the work they do and if there were any individuals outside of their family support networks who should be included in the conversations. She requested that everyone think about this one last time and speak up if they had any suggestions.
- € Lela responded Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada.
- € Lori Taylor suggested a CPS Manager or Supervisor who provide direct services.
- € Anna Villatoro suggested inviting the Child Welfare Network through Children's Advocacy Alliance.
- € Jamelle has suggested inviting politicians and Early Childhood Champions, or someone identified as an early childhood specialist, to continue building relationships and educate on important topics. This will help connect them with the early childhood sector.
- € Rachel shared her thoughts on the suggestion to include a CPS manager supervisor. She has a friend who is a social worker and works as a CPS worker in rural Nevada. During their conversations, they often discuss the barriers between county and state systems and the differences in how they serve families. Rachel's friend faces challenges due to her position's nature, which requires her to drive four hours daily, impacting the access of families on her caseload. She always asks how they can improve and discuss differences between state perspectives and actual experiences.
- € Tiffany mentioned the evolution of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Leadership group. Initially, they had a specific idea of who we wanted to be in the group, but it has since grown and shifted. Now, they will include individuals who are more hands-on with families rather than solely focused on administrative duties. During the discussion, it was mentioned that they initially focused on state agencies. However, it was suggested that we also consider regional agencies and programs that cater to rural communities, which are often overlooked and underserved. This feedback was shared by several participants who wanted to ensure that these communities have access to our services. Specifically, there was a strong emphasis on reaching out to our rural areas.
- € Tiffany mentioned that she will send out invitations to the next family support meeting. If participants recall our discussions today and realize that they know someone who would benefit from attending, they are welcome to share the invite with parent advocates they know who are working and have time to participate. Compensation for their time is a matter we need to address. However, if they have contacts within their scope of work, they are free to forward the invites to anyone who might be interested.
- € Cailin O'Connor, who works at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, expressed her appreciation for the excellent conversation we have had. She also thanked Tiffany for guiding the group through all the topics we wanted to discuss today. From her experience across many states, Cailin shared that there has always been a long-standing question about how to include child welfare in early childhood comprehensive systems conversations. She is pleased to hear that the group is considering ways to get the perspective of families who are struggling, especially those who encounter the child welfare system. Despite the challenges that come with this system, it is important to remember that it touches the most vulnerable families. Therefore, partnering with them is crucial in creating a better future.

