



Status of the 2020 Policy Recommendations of Vermont’s Early Childhood State Advisory Council As of July 2021

2020 Policy Recommendations	Status as of July 2021
A. MITIGATE COVID IMPACTS ON FAMILY ECONOMIC STABILITY & MENTAL HEALTH	
<p>Rec. 1: Mitigate The Health And Economic Effects Of The Pandemic On Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extend economic support beyond expiration of CARES Act funds that expire in December. ● Extend flexibility in eligibility for programs (e.g. Reach Up work requirements) so parents can engage in other activities that help them invest in their future and integral to the health and well-being of their family. 	<p>Significant progress: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, Department of Mental Health support</p>
<p>Rec. 2: Sustain And Strengthen The Integration Of Mental Health Services For Children And Families Through Flexible Funding For Integrated Mental Health Across Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to allow telehealth to be covered by insurance so families can access the care they need. ● Invest in flexible service delivery and availability. ● Focus on mental health prevention and staff burnout across many settings. 	<p>Initiated: Progress through the Department of Mental Health in focusing on mental health prevention and staff burnout</p>
B. RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS CHRONIC INEQUITIES IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM	
<p>Rec. 1: Partner With Vermont’s Racial Equity Task Force To Identify And Build Structures Of Support For Racially Diverse Populations And Address Health Disparities And Systemic Impacts Of Racism.</p>	<p>Initiated: BBF leadership held initial meeting with Executive Director of Racial Equity and Racial Equity Panel leader</p>
<p>Rec. 2: Align And Integrate Equity Initiatives To Leverage Impact And Expertise Across Sectors And Early Childhood Partners To Inform Strategies In The Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan And Early Childhood System.</p>	<p>Not yet initiated, Vermont was just awarded Health Resources and Services Admin. (HRSA) grant to support this effort starting 9/2021</p>

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C. EMPOWER FAMILY VOICE TO BUILD A STRONGER SYSTEM	
<p>Rec. 1: Increase Opportunities For Parent And Caregiver Representatives To Serve On Committees, Legislatively Mandated Study Sections And Decision Making Bodies To Inform Local And State Policy, Practice And Resource Allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require each legislatively mandated board/committee/study section have at least 1 parent representative with lived experience 	<p>Initiated: House Committee on Human Services actively using this recommendation to design new committees and advisory bodies</p>
<p>Rec. 2: Commit To Ensuring That Children And Families Are In All Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to the “health in all policies” initiative, this recommendation is based on incorporating child development and family well-being considerations into all decision-making across sectors and policy areas. At the state-agency and community-based partners level, and at the policy-making level, review programs, policies and legislation to ensure that revisions and requirements consider the impact and consequences to child development and family well-being. 	<p>Initiated: BBF testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, House Committee on Human Services, the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations</p>
D. STABILIZE AND SUSTAIN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE	
<p>Rec. 1: Fund Education Costs, Compensation For Early Childhood Education Workforce, Including Scholarships, Loan Repayment, And Wage Supplementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficiently fund and expand scholarship programs for early educators and maintain this revenue annually. Establish a loan repayment program for early educators. Establish a wage supplement program to progress toward adequate compensation for early educators. Prioritize workforce development and hazard pay for this sector. 	<p>Significant progress through H171 and FY22 budget</p>
<p>Rec. 2: Continue Investment In Redesigning The State’s Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) By Making Progress In Alignment With Year 3 Of The State’s 5-Year Plan, Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the CCFAP rate paid to early care and education providers so those reimbursement rates closely reflect the true cost of high-quality care thereby reducing the burden on early care and education programs to subsidize the system through low wages and other cost-saving efforts. Fully support needed investments in the technology system(s), staff and resources required to implement the redesigned CCFAP structure and providing an accessible platform for families, educators, and administrators. 	<p>Significant progress through H171 and FY22 budget</p>

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<p>E. EVOLVE OUR DATA SYSTEM TO ADDRESS GAPS</p>	
<p>Rec. 1: Restart And Support The Early Childhood Data Governance Council And Utilize The BBF Data And Evaluation Committee To Identify And Elevate Data Gaps And Align Priorities Through Cross-Sector Collaboration</p>	<p>Progress in partnerships between Agency Leaders, data stewards and BBF around SLDS, data priorities and integration. Discussions about timing and capacity for the EC Data Governance Council on hold until completion of the Systems Analysis.</p>
<p>Rec. 2: Promote Data Literacy And Using Data To Inform Policy Across Sectors By Educating Vermonters About The Importance Of High-Quality Data Collection, Reporting And Integration.</p>	<p>Initiated through BBF’s partnership with FEMA, LGK, CDD, DMH, etc. and through the Data and Evaluation VECAP Committee</p>
<p>Rec. 3: Fully Fund Existing Early Childhood Data Initiatives To Fidelity: Early Childhood Information System (E.g. Bright Futures Information System, Children’s Integrated Services) And The State Longitudinal Data System</p>	<p>Significant progress through PDG, H171, CDD, AOE, and Vermont’s Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center at BBF</p>
<p>Rec. 4: Create An Early Childhood Budget That Identifies All Financial Sources Dedicated To Children And Their Families From Prenatal To Age Eight To Monitor, Align And Leverage Financial Resources</p>	<p>Not yet initiated, HRSA grant includes funding to support BBF in this effort starting September 2021</p>