

IECMH Council of Colorado

Meeting Actions and Notes

September 17, 2:00pm – 3:30 pm

[Meeting Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

Resources

- [IECMH Council Overview](#)
- [IECMH Council Guidebook](#)
- **NEW!** [IECMH Council Community Spotlight](#) **now available on the Council website*
- [Early Childhood Leadership Commission IECMH Council Charter](#) and [Website](#)
- Elevating and Strengthening Colorado's Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Ecosystem 2025: [Strategic Plan Executive Summary](#), [Strategic Plan Infographics](#), and [Full Strategic Plan](#)
- [IECMH Legislative Dashboard](#)

Next Steps and Action Items

1. **ACTION:** Members of the ECLC and its Subcommittees and Working Groups are required to take an annual Boards and Commissions training. You can meet this requirement by:
 - a. Attending this live virtual training on September 29, 2026 from 11:00–12:00 (**invitations have been sent; please contact Shannon Wilson shannonm.wilson@state.co.us if this is not on your calendar**), OR
 - b. Reviewing the recording and slides, which will be sent out after the live training, and taking a quiz.

2. **ACTION:** Share any feedback on the ECLC priorities and messaging for the upcoming administration through September. You can use the [Feedback Form](#) or email Emily Landes at elandes@earlymilestones.org.
3. **ACTION:** Please provide your feedback and ideas for this and future IECMH Council meetings, using [this evaluation form](#). Thank you for your suggestions!
4. **ACTION:** Invest in Kids is seeking to hire a Director of IECMH! Please [share this job description](#) with your networks.
5. **ACTION:** Invest in Kids is currently contracting with Togetherworks Consulting to also host an IECMH Advocacy convening on **November 6th**, information forthcoming. Please add this to your calendars. Volunteers are welcome; please send inquiries and interest to Lauren Freemire at lauren@togetherworksconsulting.co.
6. **REMINDER:** The last 2026 IECMH Council of Colorado meeting will be held **in person on November 19 from 2:00–3:30pm** at the Colorado Health Foundation (1780 Pennsylvania St, Denver, CO 80203; *free onsite parking is accessible through the alley*). Please join us!
7. **SAVE THE DATE:** 2026 Colorado Pyramid Model Convening: October 7 9:00–1:00PM. [More information available at this link](#).

Upcoming Meetings

Steering Committee: 1st Wednesday

1-2pm

- ~~January 7, 2026~~
- ~~March 4, 2026~~
- ~~May 6, 2026~~
- ~~July 9, 2026 (11a-12pm)~~
- ~~September 2, 2026~~
- November 4, 2026

IECMH Council: 4th Thursday

2-3:30pm

- ~~January 22, 2026~~
- ~~March 26, 2026~~
- ~~May 28, 2026~~
- ~~July 23, 2026~~
- ~~September 17, 2026~~
- November 19, 2026 (in person)

Meeting Notes

Council Business:

- Consent Agenda included the [July 2026 meeting notes](#); no discussion or revisions recommended. Moved (Melissa Buchholz) and seconded (Deborah Monigan). No opposition.

Updates and Announcements

- Invest in Kids is seeking to hire a Director of IECMH! Please [share this job description](#) with your networks.
- Invest in Kids will be presenting on the IECMH Council Strategic Plan at the upcoming ZTT Convening Sept 21-24. If you have any specifics you would like to highlight, please reach out directly to Iesha Mitchell imitchell@iik.org

- Invest in Kids is currently contracting with Togetherworks Consulting to also host an IECMH Advocacy convening on November 6th, information forthcoming. Please add this to your calendars. Volunteers are welcome; please send inquiries and interest to Lauren Freemire at lauren@togetherworksconsulting.co.
- The Mind Our Futures Early Childhood group and IECMH Coalition (formerly IECMH Medicaid Coalition) are combining efforts given the alignment. The group had their first combined meeting this morning! If you are interested in being part of this group, please reach out to Alexis Alltop at aalltop@healthiercolorado.org
- [Connecting the Dots](#) in-person training happened on Sept 10; at least 150 people were registered for this training. A waiting list is available.
- Project ACORN completed [Ripple Effect](#) training for ~250 participants; also released a DC:0-5 Clinical Training for November.
- Chapter 8 project team wrapped up the final meeting in August – lots of gratitude for participants in that work. Rulemaking process will launch including formal stakeholder process; anticipate that new rules will be effective ~18 months from now.
- Funding opportunities:
 - Grant application submitted in July; funding decisions are pending and anticipated sometime this month;
 - SAMHSA released updates about new grants coming soon;
 - Meta settlement may also provide some opportunity for funding

in the prevention space.

- Council Resources
 - Ambassador Program – Ambassadors are attending a few conferences (Strengthening Families and CBHC Council table). Exciting to be in those spaces and will be bringing a lot of ideas to the December gathering.
 - [Legislative Dashboard](#)
 - [Community Spotlight Library](#)

July Meeting Evaluation Results

- Key takeaways:
 - We received 13 responses, which is more than typical. The additional time during the meeting to fill out the evaluation seems to have increased the number of responses.
 - There was one person who did not know how to suggest agenda items
 - People would like to have more small group discussions
 - Continued recommendations to be clear about whether something is an update or a call for collaboration or support

ECLC Three-Year Workplan

Council Member: Emily Landes, Early Milestones

[See this link for presentation materials](#)

- ECLC is developing communications documents for the incoming administration.
- Objectives for today are to get input into workplan priorities and get key messages for the new administration.
- Get ideas from the strategic plan
- Key findings:
 - ECLC has completed or is actively completing all past activities and strategies
 - Goal is to include more measurable activities in the future
 - The framework previously focused heavily on infrastructure and learning and development, and they want the next plan to focus on all four domains (infrastructure, learning and development, whole person health and well-being, family support and education, and economic mobility).
 - ECLC has found it challenging to influence fiscal planning, and will work on clearly defining their role and creating structures to do more of this.
 - ECLC has been engaging with families and providers, but there is not currently a formal plan for this work.
 -  THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK_ENG_WEB.pdf...
 - Infrastructure is on page 4.
- Looking ahead, what one or two activities would you most want to see the ECLC take on? Organizationally, where should that work take place

(Full ECLC, Subcommittee, or Working Group)?

- It would be helpful to have a focus on IECMH clinical workforce, it would be great to have more of a specific focus on clinicians. Lack of enough 0-5 clinicians that have training to work with a specialized population, so ongoing training and support for clinicians across prevention, promotion and treatment.
- Want to make sure there is a full spectrum of understanding of the places and spaces that IECMH work happens.
- The framework highlights health, and want to make sure mental health is included. Want to think broadly beyond early learning settings to think about other types of settings where people are engaging with families with young children.
- How can we think about shared metrics (access, quality and alignment)? All of the programs in early childhood could be feeding into, so we can show collective success.
- What work from this subcommittee would be most important to include in the next ECLC Work Plan?
 - Work in higher education – need to continue to think about higher education and their role in the workforce pipeline. Funding is a particular issue and we want to preserve existing training opportunities.
 - If there is data on the economic impact of improved infant and early childhood mental health that can be tied back to the work of the ECLC – using that as evidence to bolster the need to fund this work, for decision makers that may review the workplan and 2027-30 strategy.
 - The workforce shortage is a huge challenge. If we lose what

already exists, this will get even worse. We need to be able to find qualified people that are not just in the urban area.

- I heard feedback from the IECMH grant cohorts that students feel supported but are not sure how to navigate the workforce once they graduate. This may be in the pipeline already, but connecting students to the workforce before they graduate? (maybe in addition to internships-?) perhaps a goal for the work plan to pull in students?
- Where should ECLC focus its energy and attention going forward?
 - Wondering about ECLC's role and how often new projects come before the ECLC, and how could the ECLC make use of the expertise in the working groups. Perinatal conversations, keeping families together, etc.
 - The ECLC is going to be looking at the organizational structure to see how they best move things forward.
 - The IECMH Strategic Plan is a good reference for the ECLC.
 - How to best position the Perinatal phase into this continuum of care. So much foundational work can be done during pregnancy and the postpartum period. +2
 - ECLC develops some sort of awareness or brand - how can they position themselves to be more accessible to folks in early childhood. Approachability and accessibility to different groups of partners.
- As we prepare transition materials for the incoming administration, what do you see as the top systems-level priorities for early childhood in Colorado?
 - To support the new administration in understanding that financial

and social support for families are tied to mental health outcomes. They are two different things, but are highly interrelated.

- Ensure that their agenda is aligned with Colorado Children's Campaign.
- How to expand funding for early childhood programs, they work!
- May be space for a needs assessment to better understand what is working and what needs to be propped up.
- ECLC needs to intersect with messaging development from this Council.
- There are a number of needs assessments through individual projects and programs, but what does it look like to bring them together? Have lots of pieces, but haven't pulled them all together.
- There is also an early childhood workgroup within the Mind Our Future coalition that is being led by Children's Hospital and Healthier Colorado. This group has some recommendations.
- Supporting the maintenance of funding in this space, need to make them aware that some funders have stepped away from this space.
- The ECLC is organizing a presentation from partners who are working on transition materials for the October meeting. Shannon will reach out to you, Alexis and Iesha!

Community Spotlight: [HealthySteps](#)

Presenters: Melissa Buchholz, PsyD

[See this link for presentation materials](#)

- What is HealthySteps: An evidence-based model embedding perinatal/infant/early childhood mental health support into primary care (pediatric or family medicine) clinics. Uses a two-generation approach, leveraging well-child visits to support both children and caregivers.
- HealthySteps Specialists are typically licensed behavioral health clinicians, though some rural sites use care coordinators or nurses with workflows to connect families to additional support as needed.
- Tiered model:
 - Tier 1 (Universal): screenings for all patients, access to a support line
 - Tier 2 (Short-term): 1-3 visits for common concerns like feeding, tantrums, potty training
 - Tier 3 (Intensive): ongoing team-based visits for families needing more support
- Outcomes: Improved child health and development, increased screening rates, reduced maternal depression, higher provider satisfaction, and better clinic efficiency.
- Colorado snapshot: 31 clinics currently implementing HealthySteps, with families traveling from many rural counties without local access. Colorado has one of the highest site counts nationally. A 4-year HRSA grant is funding expansion into rural Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest Colorado.

- Sustainability challenges: Medicaid reimbursement often does not cover full program costs; services from non-licensed staff are not reimbursable; payer mix and RAE contracts vary widely across clinics, requiring blended funding strategies.
- Rural clinic selection: Uses a consortium model with strong rural representation and a co-design approach involving local partners and family voice, rather than top-down state selection.
- Q&A highlights: Discussion covered sustainability and workforce challenges, the rural clinic selection process, and interest in expanding training to social workers and foster care systems.

The next IECMH Council meeting will be November 19th from 2-3:30pm in-person at The Colorado Health Foundation.