

FWCC Meeting Notes 9/8/2025

Family Well-Being Community Collaborative

Mission: Collaborate to keep families safely together and supported in their communities and to radically reduce inequities within the child welfare court system.

Welcome

Land Acknowledgment

- Presentation regarding Orange Shirt Day on September 30th, which honors Indigenous children and families.
 - For more details and resources, see attached PowerPoint slides regarding Orange Shirt Day.
 - Reflection: Think about how we all can take action personally, organizationally, and systemically.

Introduction of New FWCC Co-Chair Natalie Green

- Kelly Warner-King introduced Natalie Green, DCYF Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare, who is the new FWCC co-chair, and expressed her appreciation to former co-chair Vickie Ybarra for her work with the FWCC and warm hand off.
- Natalie expressed her appreciation and excitement to be part of the FWCC. She also shared with members that she is open to feedback.
- The FWCC is the action arm of the Commission on Children in Foster Care (CCFC).
 - The CCFC is currently going through a re-design process, and will be testing the new structure for working with the FWCC during the next year. The process will be shared with the FWCC as the CCFC goes through it.

FWCC Workgroup Updates

- Guardianship Workgroup – *Marci Comeau, OPD*
 - Marci Comeau provided an update on the Guardianship Workgroup.
 - The Guardianship Workgroup continues to meet monthly.
 - The Guardianship Tip Sheet Subcommittee has completed drafts of all planned products, and is working on obtaining final approval.
 - The Training Subcommittee is planning to conduct a four-part training series, designed to:
 - Clarify the intersection and distinctions between Title 11 and Title 13 guardianships.
 - Promote early intervention and prevention strategies to support families.
 - Equip stakeholders with knowledge of legal frameworks, available resources, and best practices.
 - Strengthen coordination between judicial systems, DCYF, and community partners.

Training Format: Four 1-hour sessions delivered monthly, starting in early 2026:

- Session 1: Legal Structures & Foundations—to include Marci, Celeste Miller, and Geene Delaplane.
- Session 2: Practical Navigation & Support Systems—to include Geene and Hannah Gold.
- Session 3: Systems Collaboration & Real-Life Application—panel discussion, to include Marci and others.

- Session 4: Lived Experience & Integration—panel of lived experts who have experience with guardianships will discuss how they navigated the system and suggestions for improvement.
- Harm of Removal Workgroup – *Laura Vogel, FYJP*
 - The workgroup continues to produce guidance for harm of removal for all ages. They are currently working on the “9-11 years old” age group.
 - They anticipate meeting again as a group in January 2026, and hope to have that guidance done by then.
 - The workgroup also plans to seek approval through the CCFC to continue creating more robust mitigation guidance for the work in 2026.
- Child & Youth Trafficking Workgroup – *Laura Vogel, FYJP*
 - This workgroup has completed its work, and this is the last time it will be on the FWCC agenda unless it is called back for additional work.
 - The workgroup created a series of four benchcards. The projects produced by the workgroup can be found at <https://fyjp.org/addressing-child-and-youth-trafficking-in-dependency-cases-benchcards/>.
- Engaging Parents at Shelter Care Workgroup – *Sarah Burns & Warner King, FYJP*
 - A PowerPoint (PPT) presentation was provided by Sarah Burns for the Engaging Parents at Shelter Care (EPSC) Workgroup update.
 - The workgroup completed its journey mapping process, with participation from a large group of parents and youth with lived experience. That process identified seven key opportunity areas.
 - Focus is back on developing the purpose and mission statements, and planning next steps.
 - This is a good time to join the EPSC workgroup for those interested.
 - All of this work is being framed with a hope-centered lens.
 - For additional details, please refer to the attached PPT slides.
 - If you have input to share or are interested in joining the workgroup, please contact Sarah at sarah.burns@courts.wa.gov.
- FWCC workgroups are open to all who are interested. Each of the workgroup HUBs can be accessed here: <https://fyjp.org/family-well-being-community-collaborative-fwcc/>. If you are interested in joining any of the workgroups, please reach out to the workgroup facilitators.

Launch of Court Process for Cases Without Removal Workgroup – *Laura Vogel, FYJP*

- A presentation regarding the launch of the Court Process for Cases Without Removal Workgroup was provided by Laura Vogel. Background information and the full details about the workgroup are available in the attached PowerPoint slides.
 - We have been talking about this for a while as a system, and had many conversations about it over the last two years surrounding HB 1227.
 - Laura encourages everyone to get used to using this language: “in-home pre fact-finding cases”, and to stop using “in home dependency” language for these cases since some of the children are not in dependencies yet.
 - Facilitators for the workgroup will include:
 - Laura Vogel, Facilitator
 - Tarassa, Secondary Facilitator, and
 - Jurist in Residence: Retired Judge Anne Hirsch.
 - Natalie Green requested the workgroup also add a DCYF Co-Facilitator, and she will send Laura the name of that person.

- Questions about the workgroup were addressed, and the following was noted:
 - The workgroup will have a crosswalk and keep track of pattern forms, etc., including data needs.
 - The workgroup will have discussions related to statutory authority for filing dependency petitions without requests for removal.
 - The workgroup's scope was determined by FYJP (as they facilitate the workgroups) through conversations with the Department, conversations with current and former FWCC co-chairs Vickie and Natalie, and many conversations that started back on the 1227 work, and questions have been carried through from there. It was decided the workgroup will focus on the court side because FYJP received multiple requests for that. As the group comes together, tweaking this goal will also be okay and appropriate.
 - The project is anticipated to be about a year, and the end goal is to develop recommendations.
 - Part of the process will be to map the current shelter care process (for example: Spokane and Kitsap have seen recent increases in dependency petitions filed without requests for removal). The workgroup will look at what our state, as well as other states, are currently doing, including working with FJCIP Coordinators.
 - The workgroup will also ask Tarassa Froberg for help in ensuring the recommendations are in line with the current safety framework.
 - The workgroup will provide updates at the FWCC Meetings. Active participation is needed and expected.
 - We will likely not find a recurring date/time that works for everyone. If you can't attend the workgroup meetings, feel free to send a designee for yourself/your agency so we can include your agency's input.
 - An email will be sent out soon requesting interest in the workgroup. Please reply to that email if you are interested in being part of the workgroup, even if you already told Laura you are interested, as that will be helpful to her. Laura can be contacted at laura.vogel@courts.wa.gov.

Next Meeting – November 10, 2025, 12-1:30pm.