

**Update from Commissioner Lambrew**

- COVID update (see attachment)
  - Omicron caused surge in Maine cases of covid, but did not result in increase of children being hospitalized
  - Vaccinations
    - Children age 5-11 - 42% first dose, 37% second dose
    - Youth age 12-19 - 71% first dose, 67% second dose, ~31% boosters
    - Hope to learn more about vaccinations for children under 5 years old in April 2022 (57,000 children in Maine under the age of 6; over half are eligible for MaineCare)
  - Continue to support pooled testing in schools
  - Encourage families to order Covid-19 test kits by mail ([covidtests.gov](https://covidtests.gov) and [AccessCovidTests.org](https://AccessCovidTests.org))
  - Treatments – 3 currently authorized for children aged 12-18 years in high-risk groups
  - Guidance – currently reviewing guidance and procedures for schools and child care providers
- Overview of Governor's supplemental budget initiatives related to children and families: salary supplements to early childhood educators, strengthens the child welfare system, fully funds free school meals, expands nature-based summer programming, increases the Maine's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), two years of free community college, and overhauls the educational opportunity tax credit ("Opportunity Maine")

This is supplemental (not the biennial) budget and complements the biennial budget and the work parallels that of the Maine Jobs Recovery Plan (MJRP)

Comment from Commissioner Sauschuck – Also included in the proposed budget is a (total of 8) behavioral health liaison (Masters-level clinician) to be imbedded with each Maine State Troop barrack to assist with best practice, co-responder options programming.

Comment from Commissioner Makin – We have requested to make permanent Maine School Safety Center within the Department of Education <https://www.maine.gov/doe/safety>

Comment from Commissioner Liberty - DOC continues to invest in Wrap-Around/Diversion services

**Brief Overview of the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) -**

Commissioner Sauschuck

[Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program \(COSSAP\) | Overview | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](#)

- Department of Public Safety (DPS) partnered with DHHS
- \$6.2 million grant over 3 years
- Initiatives: Administration of Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) by EMS; LD1333- Dispensation of Naloxone Hydrochloride by Emergency Medical Services Providers; Implementation of Recovery Coach Training Program to law enforcement officers; 40% salary/benefits cost of Community Outreach Coordinator based in Sanford Police Department; and an evaluation process through Muskie School of Public Service

Maine Drug Enforcement Agency 2021 Annual Report

<https://www.maine.gov/dps/mdea/documents/2021AnnualReport.pdf>

## **Supplemental Budget Proposal to Support the Early Childhood Education Workforce - Dr. Todd Landry and Ana Hicks**

(see attachment)

- Average wage for entry-level, full-time child care workers in Maine - \$25,200; \$26,750 for preschool teachers)
  - Nationwide average \$25,460
  - An increase in wages would require rate raise for families
- Legislation
  - LD 1652: An Act to Build a Child Care System by Recruiting and Retaining Maine's Early Childhood Educators Workforce - includes salary supplements for early childhood educators working in child care settings
  - LD 1678: An Act to Support Child Care Providers and School Readiness through Tax Credits - includes refundable tax credits for early childhood educators
- Child Care Stabilization Grants - Office of Child and Family Services providing \$200 monthly stipends to educators and staff in child care programs (Oct 2021-Sept 2022) using federal ARPA Child Care Stabilization Funds
- Overview of the Zero to Three Team Work
  - Public/private workgroup working with the Zero to Three national organization providing technical assistance on issues and priorities related to young children and their families
  - The Zero to Three Workgroup held meetings with program administrators from five states to understand policies and programs in other states
  - The group examined the most commonly implemented policies including tax credits, wage supplements, and education awards.
  - Held five listening sessions with child care center directors, family child care owners and directors, and early childhood educators working in child care settings
  - Held four stakeholder meetings with business leaders, advocates/policy experts, early childhood education representatives from provider associations and Head Start
  - Key takeaways: staff shortages/difficulty retaining staff; advocated tiered approach based on education/experience; preference for monthly payments and wage supplementation over tax credits
  - Worked with policy writer to produce report to explain disadvantages/advantages of each policy option:
    - State Policy Options for Early Childhood Educator Compensation:  
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/inline-files/Final%20ECE%20Workforce%20Report%20Jan%202022.pdf>
  - Governor's Supplemental Budget Proposal
    - Provides more than \$12 million for salary supplements for child care and early childhood educators in licensed child care programs
    - Would continue existing monthly stipends when federal funding ends and establish program of tiered supplements based upon experience and education

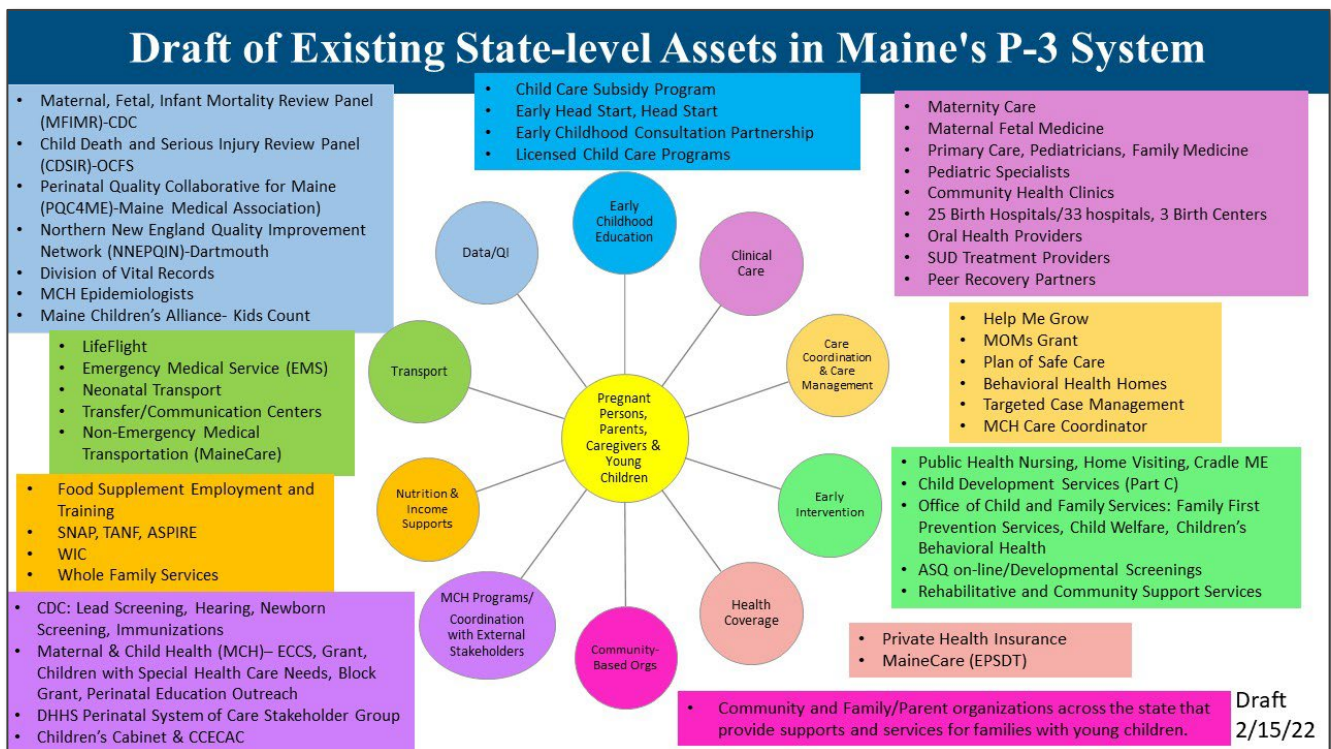
Shout out to public members of working group: Tara Williams from the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children, Pam LaHaye from Maine Children's Trust, Tracye Fortin from KVCAP and Educare. Jennifer Beck from the JTG Foundation.

## **Presentation of Help Me Grow and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant - Amy Belisle, Angie Bellefleur, Maryann Harakall and Ashly Olen**

(see attachment)

- Aligns with Children Cabinet's goal and strategies, as well as DHHS goals
- Build Early Childhood Systems
  - Accelerate system building with new funding opportunities

- Build on positive lessons learned from COVID-19 while acknowledging the stresses of the pandemic on families and systems
- Encourage developmental promotion and universal screening
- Enhance family engagement in programs
- Provide nurturing, healthy environments for all families with programs that honor diversity, equity and inclusion
- Review/Building Perinatal Systems for Care
  - Reduce infant mortality rate
  - Improve care for pregnant people with substance use disorder (SUD) and substance exposed infants (SEI) – e.g. MaineMOM
  - Safe Sleep Campaign
  - Review perinatal systems of care including hospital maternal/newborn care; risk assessment for preterm delivery; maternal transport; and EMS obstetric emergencies/newborn care
  - Present works includes develop policies for expanded pregnancy/post-partum coverage; join Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) <https://safehealthcareforeverywoman.org/aim/>
  - Update map on Maine hospitals by level of maternal and newborn care <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/mch/documents/ME%20Perinatal%20and%20Neonatal%20Level%20of%20Care%202022.pdf>
  - Previous work around early intervention services includes developmental screenings (followed up with referral for services); developmental systems integration; and cultural competence
- Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) grant
  - Works across systems/departments making health care, child development and other services for young children easier for families to access and navigate
  - Uses strategic plan created by Children’s Cabinet as framework
  - Work directly with Help Me Grow <https://www.helpmegrow.org/>
  - Parent and stakeholder engagement will inform the process and implementation
  - Targeted strategies to address health disparities
  - Existing state-level assets in Maine's P-3 system



- Help Me Grow Model
  - State Coordinator - Angie Bellefleur
  - Model promotes collaboration across child-serving sectors in order to build a more efficient and effective system that promotes the optimal healthy development of young children and increases protective factors that can maximize the wellbeing of children and families.
  - Work with existing providers
  - Four components to maintain fidelity to the model:
    - Centralized access point (phone, online, text, etc.) connecting children and their families to services/care
    - Resource specialists
    - Child health care and childcare provider outreach to support early detection and intervention – developmental screening ASQ-3
    - Family and Community outreach to promote use of HMG and developmental milestones and facilitate networking for families and service providers (community gatherings/presentations and focus groups)
    - Data collection/analysis - identify gaps and barriers to services (continuous quality improvement)
  - ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) online developmental screening tool
    - Roll out of pilot in spring
    - Can be completed at home from any device
    - Will be rolled out with child care providers, head start and other programs working with young children

**2021 Maine Children’s Cabinet Report** [https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/GOPIF\\_CC\\_AnnualReport2021.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/GOPIF_CC_AnnualReport2021.pdf)

**Next meeting**

Tuesday, April 5 10:30-11:30am

- Apprenticeships
- Career Exploration
- Other workforce initiative for youth

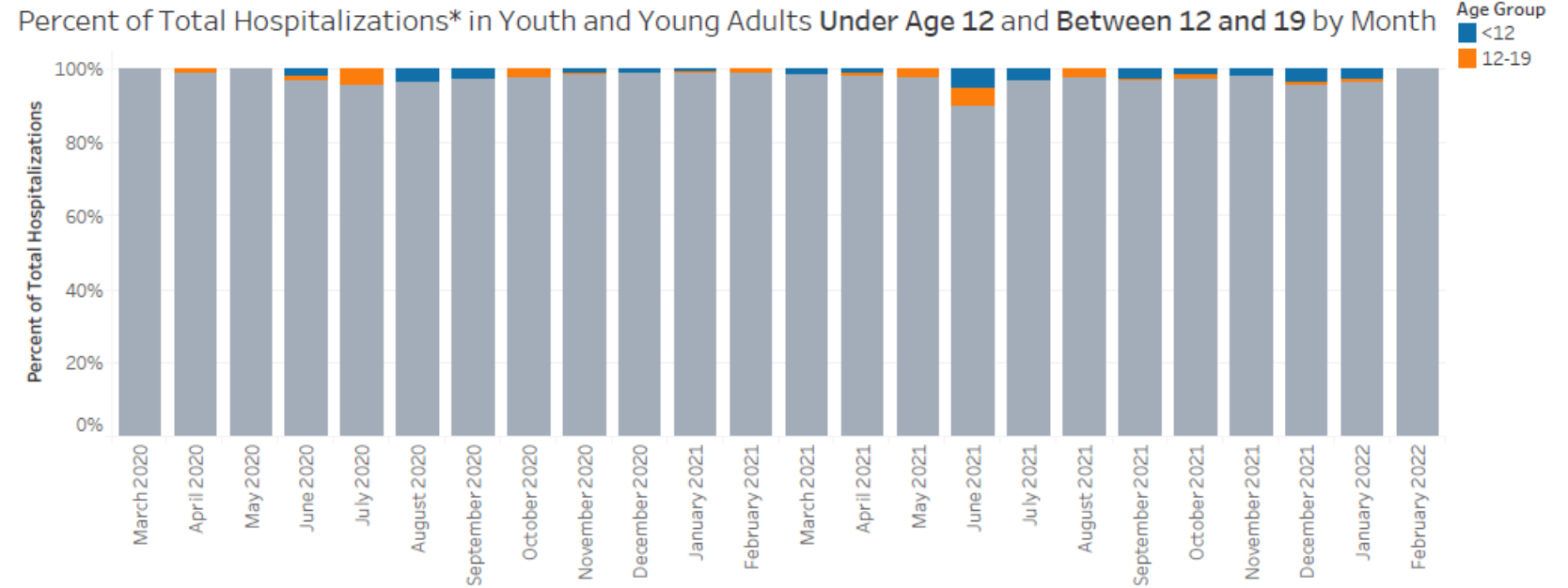
# Update on COVID-19 and Children

## Trends

- Omicron surge and impact

## Vaccination:

- 42% of children ages 5-11 have gotten their first dose; 37% second dose
- 71% of youth ages 12-19 have gotten their first dose; 67% second dose; ~31% boosters
- Anticipating more information on COVID-19 vaccines for younger children ages 6 months to 5 years in April 2022:
  - ~57,000 children in Maine
  - 28,642 enrolled in MaineCare



\*Maine CDC identifies hospitalizations through the Ask on Order Entry (AOE) questions and through case investigation. During surge periods Maine CDC only investigates a small proportion of the cases reported to us. If a patient was not eligible for investigation, and hospitalization was not indicated on the AOE, or AOE's were not complete they are not included in the analysis. Therefore, this analysis represents true hospitalizations, but likely not all hospitalizations.

## Testing

- Continuing to support pooled testing in schools: 470 schools participating
- Encouraging families to order COVID-19 test kits by mail: Federal website: [covidtests.gov](https://covidtests.gov) and 125,000 tests available to Maine residents through the Project ACT website, [AccessCovidTests.org](https://AccessCovidTests.org)

**COVID-19 Treatments:** [Three authorized](#) for children aged 12-18 years in high-risk groups

## Guidance:

- Maine CDC/DOE updated the [current School Standard Operating Procedure \(SOP\) \(2/16/22\)](#) and indicated plan for review after February vacation
- [US CDC Child Care Guidance was updated](#) and the Maine OCFS issued [Interim Guidance for Child Care Providers \(1/26/22\)](#)

# Key Initiatives in Governor Mills' Supplemental Budget

- **Invests in the Early Childhood Education Workforce**: Proposes more than \$12 million for salary supplements to early childhood educators working in child care settings.
- **Strengthens the Child Welfare System**: Proposes nearly \$8 million to improve Maine's child welfare system, with \$6.2 million from the General Fund, including additional child protective staff and funding to strengthen the Child Welfare Ombudsman Program.
- **Fully Funds Free School Meals**: Proposes the on-going funding needed to provide universal free meals in public schools.
- **Expands Nature-based Summer Programming**: The 2022 Summer Marine Sciences Collaboration will offer middle and high school students opportunities to participate in nature-based and outdoor learning with a focus on Marine sciences and protecting Maine's marine ecosystem.

# Key Supplemental Budget Initiatives (continued)

- **Increases the EITC for Low- and Moderate-Income Working Maine Families**: Proposes \$27.6 million to help families meet their basic needs by increasing the value of Maine’s Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- **Provides Two Years of Free Community College**: Proposes \$20 million in one-time General Fund dollars to provide up to two years of free community college for all students from the high school graduating classes of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 who enroll in a Maine community college full-time.
- **Overhauls the Educational Opportunity Tax Credit**: Proposes \$42.1 million in ongoing General Fund dollars to dramatically overhaul Education Opportunity Tax Credit (“Opportunity Maine”), broadening eligibility to ensure that those who live and work in Maine and graduate with student debt will be eligible for up to \$25,000 of debt relief over the course of their lifetime.

# Investing in Maine's Early Childhood Education Workforce

**Children's Cabinet Meeting**

**February 22, 2022**

Presentation by

Todd Landry, Director of Office of Child and Family Services, DHHS

Ana Hicks, Children's Cabinet Coordinator, GOPIF



## Wages for Early Childhood Educators Are Relatively Low in Maine & Nationwide

- In 2020, the average entry-level annual pay for full-time child care workers in Maine was equivalent to \$25,200 and \$26,750 for preschool teachers.
- The median annual wage of all child care workers, \$28,790, was 28% less than the statewide median.
- Maine is not alone in this challenge. Nationwide, the median annual wage for all child care workers is \$25,460.
- To increase pay for child care workers, programs must raise rates on parents, which they are apprehensive to do.



## Proposals and Initiatives to Support the ECE Workforce

### Two key pieces of legislation

#### **LD 1652: An Act to Build a Child Care System by Recruiting and Retaining Maine's Early Childhood Educators Workforce**

Introduced by House Speaker Ryan Fecteau

- Includes salary supplements for early childhood educators working in child care settings.

#### **LD 1678: An Act to Support Child Care Providers and School Readiness through Tax Credits**

Introduced by Representative Rebecca Millett

- Includes refundable tax credits for early childhood educators.

### Child Care Stabilization Grants

Starting on October 1, 2021, Office of Child and Family Services started providing **\$200 monthly stipends** to educators and staff in child care programs working directly with children with **ARPA Child Care Stabilization Funds**. These monthly stipends will continue through September 2022.

# Zero to Three Workgroup

- Speaker Fecteau requested a group to examine potential policy options for compensation for the ECE workforce.
- There was already in place a public/private workgroup working with the Zero to Three national organization providing technical assistance on issues and priorities related to young children and their families.
- The Zero to Three Workgroup held meetings with program administrators from **five states to understand polices and programs in other states.**
- The group examined the **most commonly implemented policies** including tax credits, wage supplements, and education awards.
- Held **five listening sessions** with child care center directors, family child care owners and directors, and early childhood educators working in child care settings.
- Held **four stakeholder meetings** with business leaders, advocates/policy experts, early childhood education representatives from provider associations and Head Start.





## State Policy Options for Early Childhood Educator Compensation

January 2022

- Zero to Three Workgroup developed and published a **policy paper explaining state policy options** for ECE compensation, explaining programs from other states and laying out the advantages and disadvantages of each policy option.
- The policy paper included a **summary of the listening sessions and stakeholder meetings**.
  - Key takeaways:
    - Child care directors reported some staff shortages and difficulty retaining staff.
    - Significant majority of participants advocated for a **tiered approach based upon education and experience**
    - Clear preference for **monthly payments**.
    - **Wage supplements** were heavily preferred.



# Governor's Supplemental Budget Proposal

- The Governor's Supplemental Budget Proposal makes a significant investment in the child care and early childhood workforce by **providing more than \$12 million for salary supplements for child care and early childhood educators in licensed child care programs** including funding for implementation.
- If approved, these supplements will continue the existing monthly stipends when federal funding ends. By July 1, 2023, OCFS will establish a program of tiered supplements based upon experience and education.

# Help Me Grow and the Early Childhood Comprehensive System Program in Maine

Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
February 2022



# Agenda

1

**Welcome and Review Maine DHHS and Children's Cabinet Priorities (2 min)**

*Ana Hicks, Senior Policy Analyst and Children's Cabinet Coordinator, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future*

2

**Vision for Building Early Childhood Systems in Maine and Background for Current Work (8 min)**

*Amy Belisle, MD, MBA, MPH, Chief Child Health Officer, DHHS Commissioner's Office*

3

**Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Program, (ECCS) Overview (10 min)**

*Maryann Harakall, Maternal and Child Health Program Director, Maine CDC*  
*Ashley Olen, RN, ECCS Program Manager, Maine CDC*

4

**Help ME Grow (HMG) Overview (10 Min)**

*Angie Bellefleur, Help Me Grow Project Manager, Maine OCFS*

# Review Child Health Priorities

## Children's Cabinet Goals

- All Maine children enter kindergarten prepared to succeed
- Aligns with key strategies in the Children's Cabinet Plan for Young Children.

## DHHS Goals

- Provide Leadership on Children's Health Across DHHS and State
- Maintain a focus on the DHHS Priority: Maine Children grow up in safe, healthy, and supportive environments, allowing them to thrive throughout their lives





# Children's Cabinet Plan for Young Children:

## All Maine Children Enter Kindergarten Prepared to Succeed

The Children's Cabinet will implement key strategies to promote the healthy development of all young children in Maine and ensure that all children grow up in healthy, safe and supportive environments. The Cabinet will strive to engage the voice of parents in a culturally and linguistically accessible way as we further develop and implement our strategies.

### Areas of Focus

The Children's Cabinet will implement strategies that will:

1. Increase access to affordable early care & education, preventive and early intervention services for young children and their families.
2. Raise the quality of our early care and education system and support families to access quality programming.
3. Recruit, prepare and retain a diverse early childhood workforce.

### Children's Cabinet Strategies

#### Short term strategies: 2020 - 2021

- ❖ Streamline, simplify and raise awareness about the eligibility process for the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP).
- ❖ Provide start-up funds to existing or new child care programs to create new slots, particularly in rural areas, for infants & toddlers.
- ❖ Offer stipends to infant caregivers receiving CCSP to recognize the high cost of providing infant care.
- ❖ Increase the quality bump to child care programs on the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) serving infants & toddlers.
- ❖ Fund start-up grants to expand public pre-K, incentivizing partnerships between schools, Head Start and child care programs.
- ❖ Provide scholarships to help students with low and moderate income attain associates and bachelor's degrees in early childhood education.
- ❖ Provide grants and technical assistance to child care programs to improve quality and rating on the QRIS.
- ❖ Build the infrastructure for an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS).

#### Intermediate strategies: 2020 – 2023

- ❖ Implement the early childhood mental health consultation pilot sites and expand statewide to help parents and educators support the social and emotional development of young children, particularly children with special needs.
- ❖ Support opportunities and strategies for increasing wages for early childhood educators.
- ❖ Increase access to, expand and strengthen early childhood programming at Career and Technical schools.
- ❖ Revise the QRIS system to be a five-star system to bring all licensed child care programs into the state's quality rating system.
- ❖ Educate families about Child Find and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment in MaineCare to improve access to health and intervention services.
- ❖ Expand professional learning opportunities that support inclusive and trauma informed practices in early care and education settings.
- ❖ Offer a professional learning series on early childhood education to school administrators, particularly for those with ECE programs.

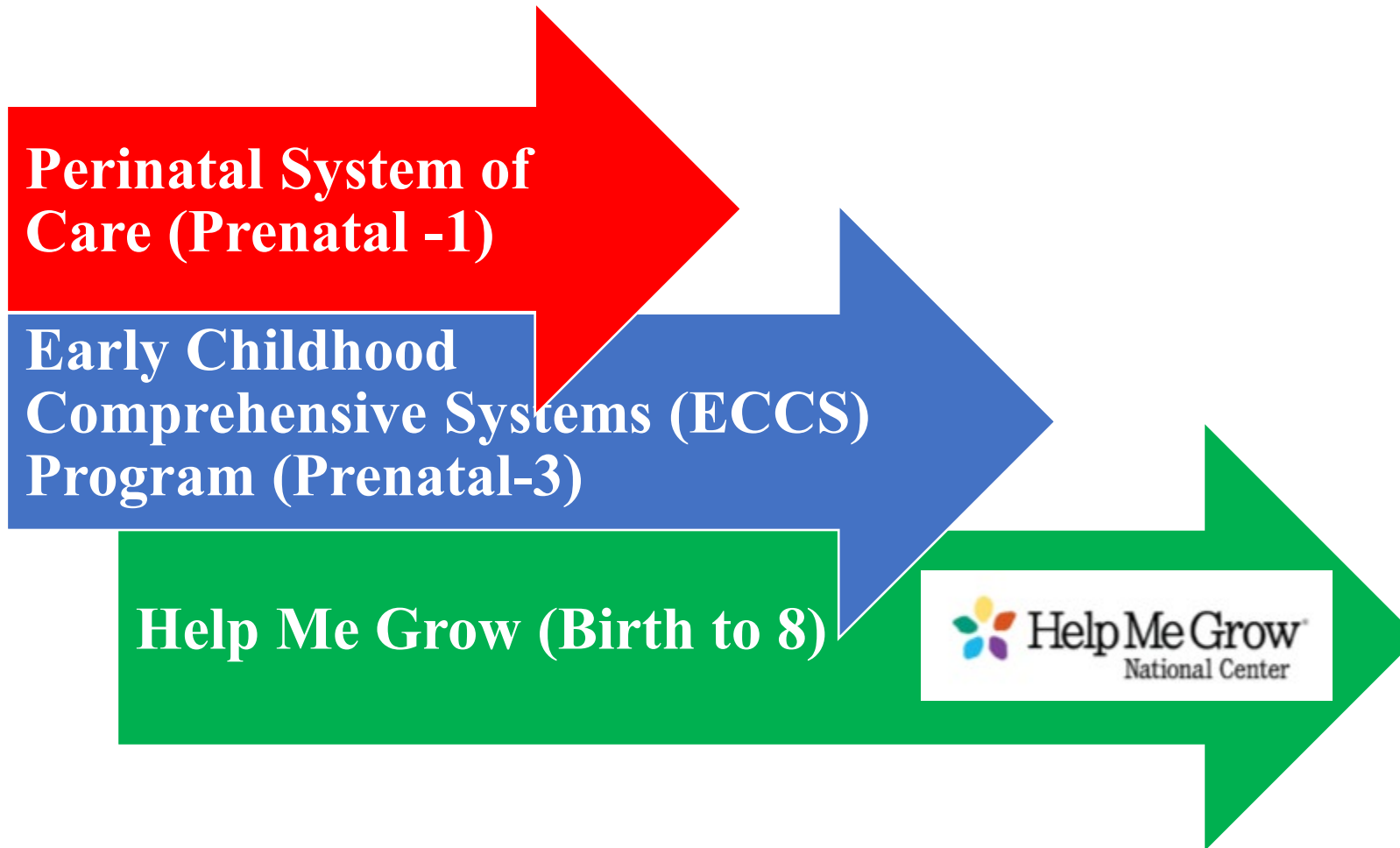
#### Long-term strategies: 2020 – 2025

- ❖ Ensure no wrong door for families to access services, such as SNAP, MaineCare and WIC, and establish a centralized entity around developmental screening and care coordination for early intervention services.
- ❖ Ensure access to and utilization of high-quality preventive services for young children and their families.
- ❖ Ensure that substance use screening, treatment and support for recovery is available for families with infants and young children.
- ❖ Increase professional development and coaching opportunities for early educators in center-based and family child care programs.
- ❖ Expand to universal public pre-K for all 4 year olds, incentivizing community partnerships and full-day, full-time programming.
- ❖ Establish an Early Childhood Integrated Data System to track progress on early childhood goals and to analyze impact of policy decisions.

# Building Systems: A Window of Great Opportunity

- Accelerate system building with new funding opportunities
- Build on positive lessons learned from COVID-19 while acknowledging the stresses of the pandemic on families and systems
- Encourage developmental promotion and universal screening
- Enhance family engagement in programs
- Provide nurturing, healthy environments for all families with programs that honor diversity, equity and inclusion

# Building Systems: Focus on Maternal-Child and Family Health



# Review of Perinatal System of Care Work: Building Perinatal Systems

## Infant Mortality Needs Assessment (2019-20)

### Improve Care for Pregnant People with SUD and SEI

- Implement Eat, Sleep, Console at Birth Hospitals
- Plan of Safe Care
- MaineMOM Initiative

## Safe Sleep Campaign (2019-present)

### Perinatal System of Care Workgroup (2020-present)

- Hospital Maternal and Newborn Levels of Care- LOCATE Subgroup
- Risk Assessment for Preterm Delivery Subgroup
- Maternal Transport Subgroup
- EMS updated Protocols on Obstetric Emergencies and Newborn Care

## Upcoming Work (Present)

- Develop policies for expanded Pregnancy and Post-Partum Coverage
- Join Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) QI Work with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant



# Building Systems: Background on Previous HMG Work in Maine

**2009: Maine Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) Work on Developmental Screening with 5 Pilot sites**

**2010-16: CHIPRA (MaineCare), SIM (CMMI) Grant; First STEPS work led by Maine Quality Counts (QC) on Development and Autism Screening with over 100 Primary Care Practices**

**2012-3: Developmental Systems Integration Project (DSI) started at QC funded by MCDC Preventive Services Block Grant and then MCH Block Grant- Brings together Public Health Nursing (PHN), Early Head Start/HS, Maine Families Home Visiting, Child Development Services, Primary Care Providers, Maine Parent Federation, Maine Autism Society, Maine Children's Alliance, MDDC, and others!**

**2013: Cradle ME Pilot Launched by Maine CDC PHN and Maine Families Home Visiting to streamline referrals**

**2015: Regional pilots done for Developmental Screening Community Initiative (DSCI): Waterville, Bangor, MidCoast; 2016: Cumberland County**

**2015: Maine Developmental Disability Council organizes Maine team to attend Northeast Regional Conference on Developmental Screening, Referral and Response. Maine begins to explore Help Me Grow. HMG Technical Assistance site visit and Initial TA report by National HMG**

**2016: Maine became HMG Affiliate State with Maine Quality Counts (QC) as part of DSI work; QC hosted four planning groups established around key components; Planning report completed**

**2017-18: DSI work on cultural competence and screening, 2-1-1 work in Cumberland County on children's resources; 2018-9: DSI completed 4 care coordination online modules after stakeholder meetings**

**2019-2020: Maine Children's Cabinet Reestablished: Preschool Development Grant Renewal Submitted with Help Me Grow as strategy: LD 1635 Report Written, PDG Strategic Plan Completed; MaineCare starts planning for ASQ Online to support EPSDT Goals; 2020: LD 1712 enacted to support HMG**

# Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCCS)

Maine CDC



# Goals and Objectives

Maine's **Early Childhood Comprehensive System** Health Integration Prenatal-to-three (P-3) program will increase referrals to, and utilization of, P-3 programs and services by making Maine's complex health and early childhood development systems **easier for families to more effectively access and navigate**.

1

Provide a **state-level central point of coordination** (ECCS Lead) to connect Maine's various maternal and early childhood programs and, develop and expand partnerships to advance Maine's vision for a comprehensive P-3 system.

*MeCDC*

2

Develop a realistic **state-level Early Childhood Strategic Plan** which identifies the resources necessary and available to implement strategies and meet goals and objectives.

*Maine Children's Cabinet*

3

Strengthen Maine's perinatal system of care and integrate programs and services across the maternal and early childhood system.

*MeCDC, PQC4ME*

4

Establish a **"no wrong door" P-3 care coordination model for Maine** to strengthen and improve linkages across the maternal and early childhood system.

*HMG*

5

Convene **state-level education and early childhood leaders and stakeholders** to identify resources needed to sustain and advance ECCS priorities and programs.

*Maine Children's Cabinet*

6

Develop **targeted strategies to address health disparities** based on geographic region, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. *Maine Children's Cabinet, MeCDC, HMG, PQC4ME*



# Draft of Existing State-level Assets in Maine's P-3 System

- Maternal, Fetal, Infant Mortality Review Panel (MFIMR)-CDC
- Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel (CDSIR)-OCFS
- Perinatal Quality Collaborative for Maine (PQC4ME)-Maine Medical Association)
- Northern New England Quality Improvement Network (NNEPQIN)-Dartmouth
- Division of Vital Records
- MCH Epidemiologists
- Maine Children's Alliance- Kids Count

- Child Care Subsidy Program
- Early Head Start, Head Start
- Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
- Licensed Child Care Programs

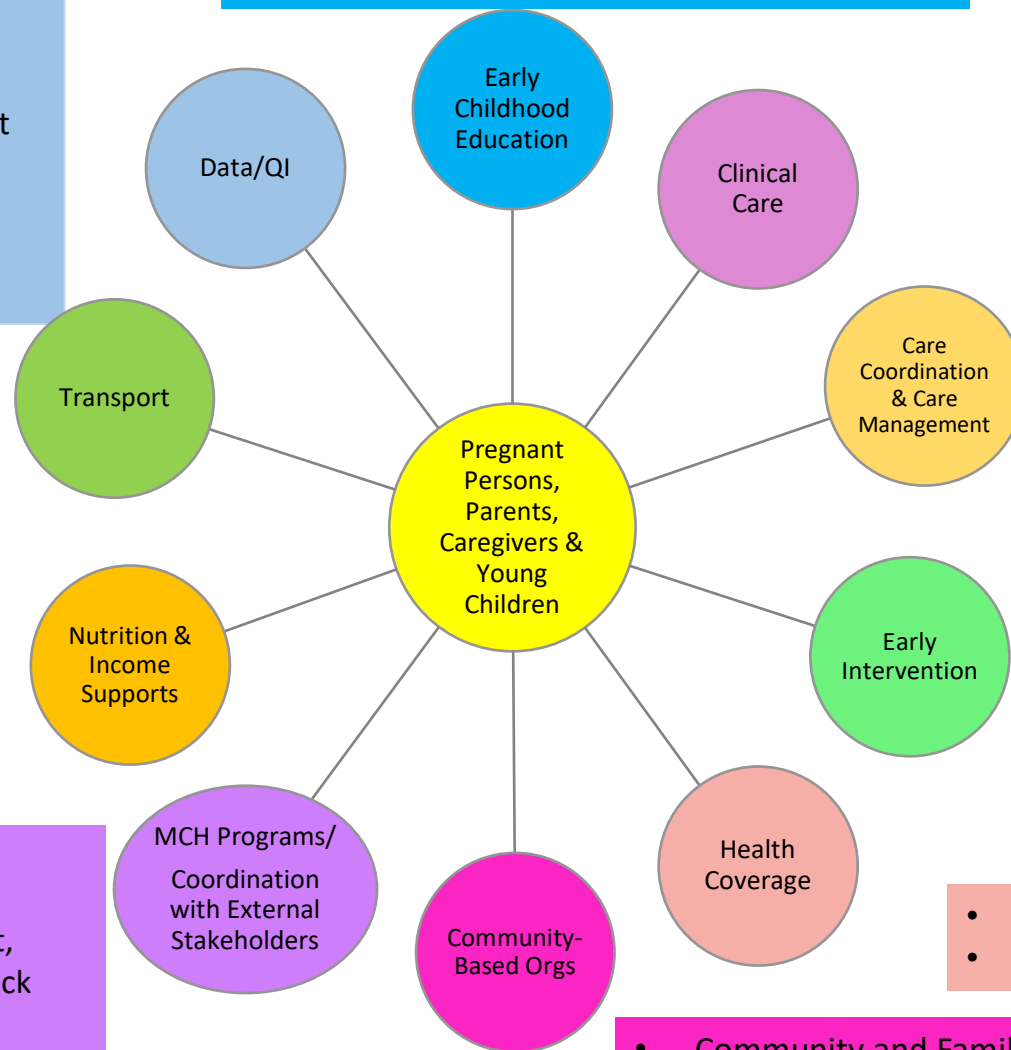
- Maternity Care
- Maternal Fetal Medicine
- Primary Care, Pediatricians, Family Medicine
- Pediatric Specialists
- Community Health Clinics
- 25 Birth Hospitals/33 hospitals, 3 Birth Centers
- Oral Health Providers
- SUD Treatment Providers
- Peer Recovery Partners

- Help Me Grow
- MOMs Grant
- Plan of Safe Care
- Behavioral Health Homes
- Targeted Case Management
- MCH Care Coordinator

- Public Health Nursing, Home Visiting, Cradle ME
- Child Development Services (Part C)
- Office of Child and Family Services: Family First Prevention Services, Child Welfare, Children's Behavioral Health
- ASQ on-line/Developmental Screenings
- Rehabilitative and Community Support Services

- Private Health Insurance
- MaineCare (EPSDT)

- Community and Family/Parent organizations across the state that provide supports and services for families with young children.



- LifeFlight
- Emergency Medical Service (EMS)
- Neonatal Transport
- Transfer/Communication Centers
- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (MaineCare)

- Food Supplement Employment and Training
- SNAP, TANF, ASPIRE
- WIC
- Whole Family Services

- CDC: Lead Screening, Hearing, Newborn Screening, Immunizations
- Maternal & Child Health (MCH)– ECCS, Grant, Children with Special Health Care Needs, Block Grant, Perinatal Education Outreach
- DHHS Perinatal System of Care Stakeholder Group
- Children's Cabinet & CCECAC

# Help Me Grow

Maine Office of Child and Family Services



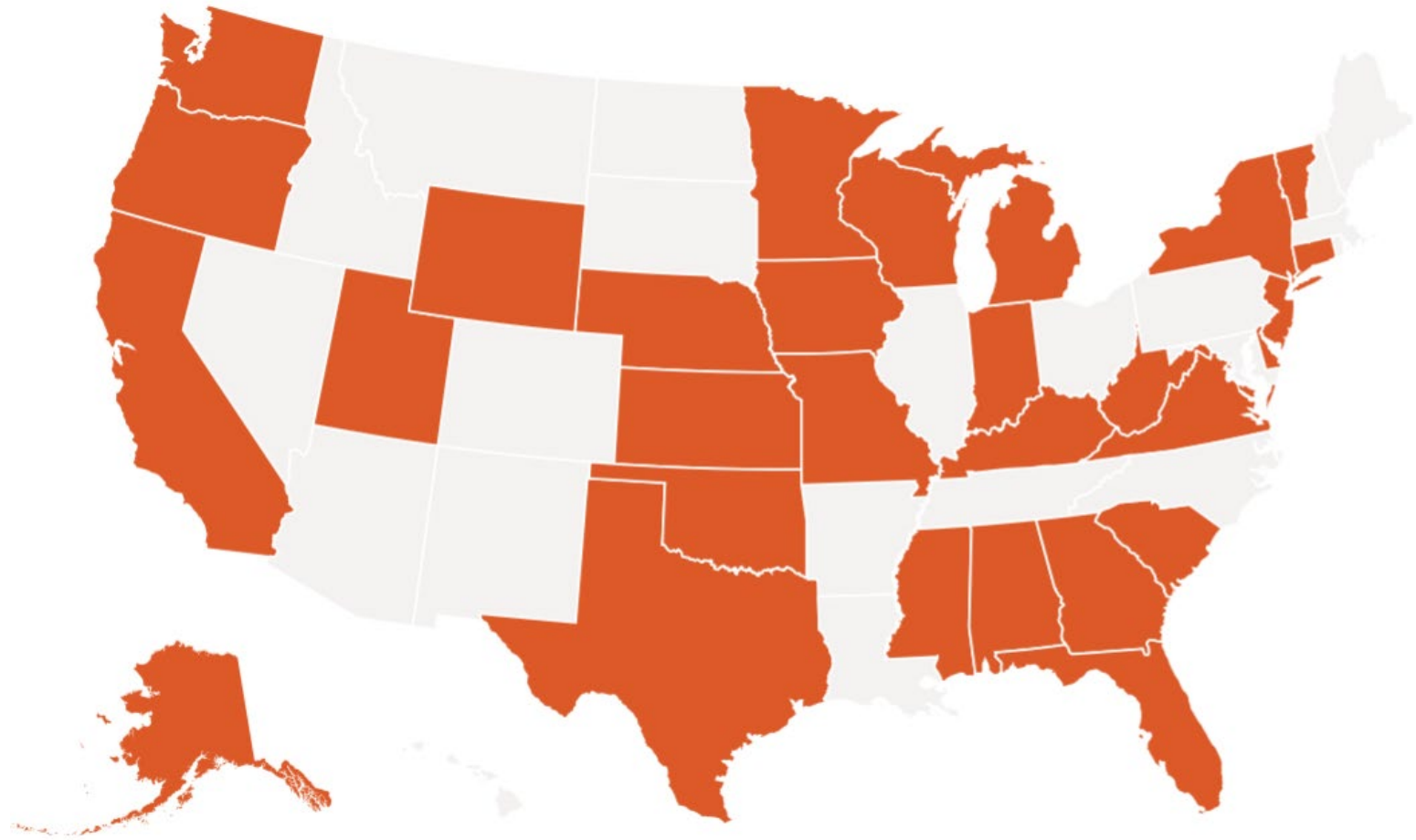
“What if our goal for child health services is not ‘merely’ to treat or even prevent childhood diseases and disorders, but is also to promote children’s optimal healthy development?”

“How do we best transform child health services to strengthen families to promote children’s optimal health, development, and well-being?”



---

# Help Me Grow National Affiliate Network

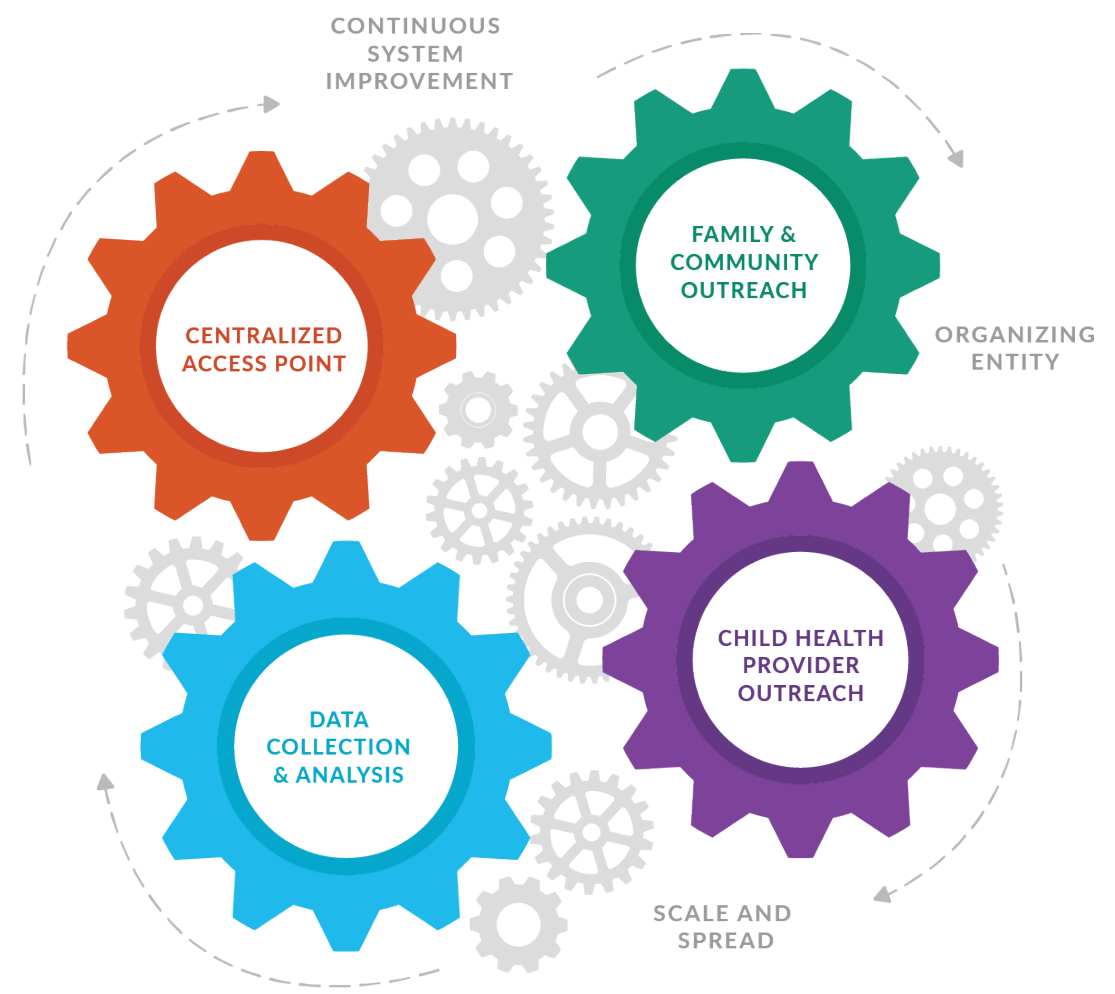


# The Help Me Grow System Model

WE BELIEVE THAT ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO GROW, DEVELOP, AND THRIVE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

Help Me Grow is a model that works to promote collaboration across child-serving sectors in order to build a more efficient and effective system that promotes the optimal healthy development of young children. When all of the organizations working on behalf of young children work together, we can:

- better prevent or reduce the impact that stress or adversity may have on children and families *and*
- increase protective factors that can maximize the well being of children and families



# THE *HELP ME GROW* SYSTEM: Core Components

1

**Centralized telephone access point** for connecting children and their families to services and care coordination, for 0-8 years.

- Resource specialists
- Access point-phone, email, text, online
- Technical Solution to manage resources and referrals

2

**Child health care and childcare provider outreach** to support early detection and intervention

- ASQ-3 Online,
- Training on Developmental Milestones and Screening

3

**Family and Community outreach** to promote use of HMG and developmental milestones and facilitate networking for families and service providers

- Communication materials
- Community presentations
- Gathering community resources for referral database

4

**Data collection and Analysis** to understand all aspects of the *HMG* system, including gaps in and barriers to services

- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Annual Evaluation of family, program and system level performance.

## Structural Requirements

Organizing Entity: OCFS

System Scale & Spread: Statewide

Continuous Quality Improvement:  
Staffing and Evaluation

# THE *HELP ME GROW* SYSTEM: Outputs, Outcomes & Impact

## Central Access Point

Children from prenatal to age 8 are connected to community supports.

Children experience nurturing relationships.

Healthier babies and children.

Reduced child maltreatment rates.

Increased school readiness.

## Child Health Provider Outreach

More children receive developmental screening.

Children received appropriate and timely developmental supports.

Families obtain timely health care.

Increased parental knowledge of child development.

## Family & Community Outreach

Caregivers receive timely and relevant pregnancy and parenting information.

Caregivers are connected to supportive services and activities.

Parents participate in developmental surveillance over time.

Increased social connections among parents.

Parents feel supported by community and each other.

## Data Collection & Analysis

Dissemination of data for continuous system improvement.

Development of a continuum of information and supports for families.

Resource and capacity gaps are identified.

Advocacy efforts are informed by data.

Improved allocation of resources to better serve families.

Improved efficiency, availability and quality of community resources.

Outputs

Outcomes

Impact

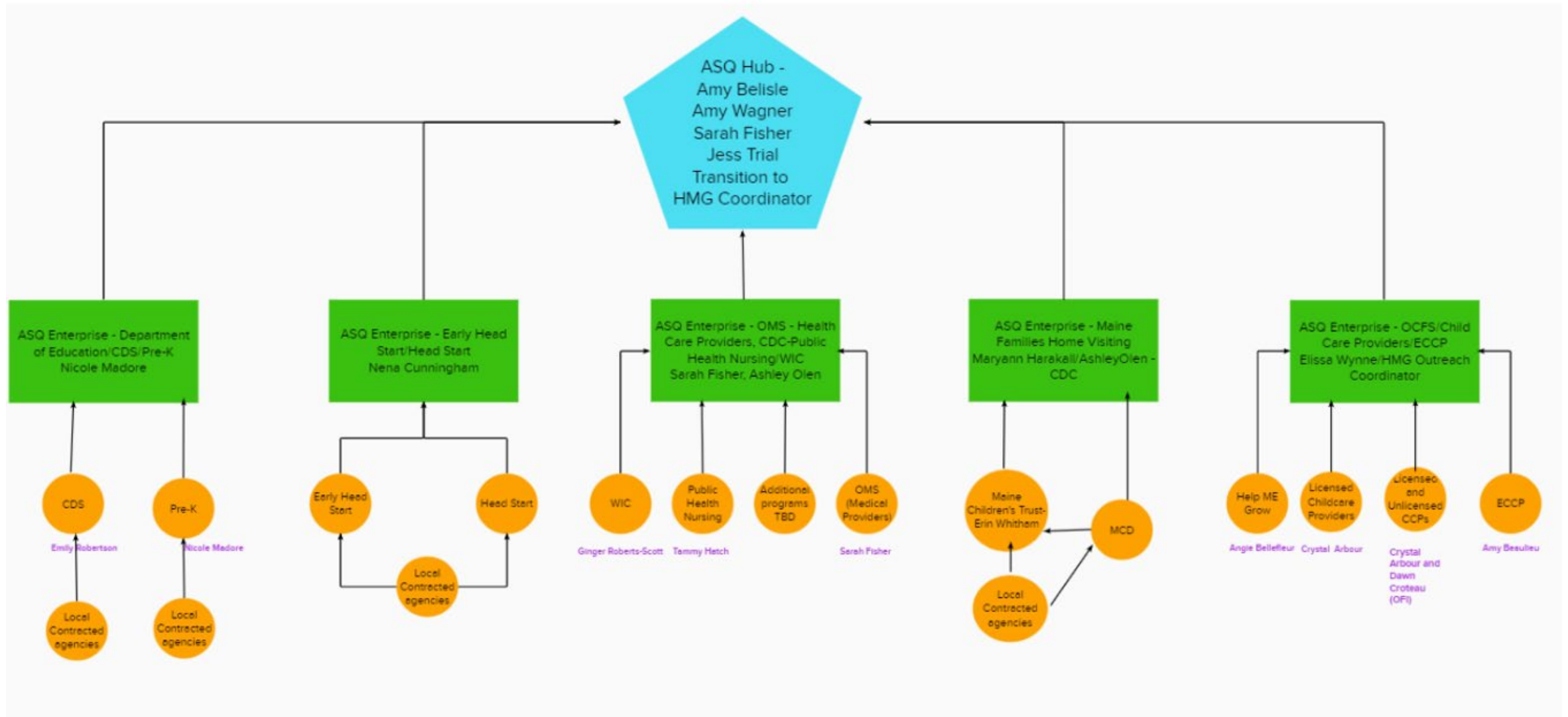
# Increase Developmental Screening with the ASQ Online Program

- DHHS/MaineCare (with the assistance of the J.T. Gorman Foundation) is purchasing the ASQ Online Enterprise System for Maine: Ages and Stages Questionnaire Developmental Screening (ASQ-3) and Social Emotional (ASQ-SE)
- Will be part of the HMG System
- Will pilot this spring with some childcare and Head Start providers and then expand to other programs serving young children
- Has data management and reporting abilities
- Families can complete questionnaires at home from any device and receive child development learning activities





# Initial ASQ Online Structure: Hub and 5 Enterprise Accounts



# Next Steps

The Help Me Grow and ECCS Initiatives are focused on **stakeholder engagement, including integrating youth and family engagement in each initiative, and establishing protocols for evaluation and quality improvement** as foundational project work.

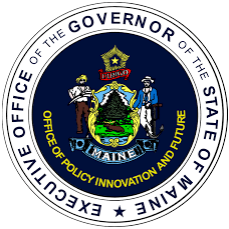
## Help Me Grow

- 1 Finalize HMG Technical Assistance Contract
- 2 Explore Resources and Database Options
  - Coordinate with existing resources and referrals systems*
  - Secure centralized access point data system*
- 3 Explore Evaluation and Communication Options
  - Secure evaluation services*
  - Develop website and communication methods*
- 4 Pilot ASQ Online
  - Spring 2022*

## Early Childhood Comprehensive System

- 1 Conduct Asset and Gap Analysis
  - Support the development of realistic state-level Early Childhood Strategic Plan*
- 2 Convene Cross-sector Advisory Council and establish Stakeholder Group
- 3 Support Strengthening the Perinatal System of Care (PSOC) and Quality Improvement Work
  - PSOC Statewide group meets quarterly – next March 2022*
  - Perinatal Quality Collaborative for ME launched Maternal Hypertension QI Bundle – AIM Bundle in January 2022*

# Thank You!

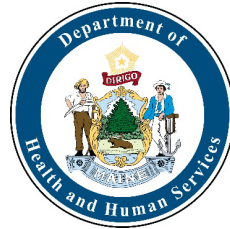


---

## Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

*Ana Hicks* – Senior  
Policy Analyst and  
Children's Cabinet  
Coordinator

Ana.Hicks@maine.gov

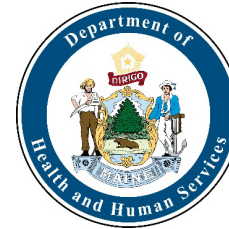


---

## DHHS Commissioner's Office

*Amy Belisle, MD, MBA,  
MPH* – Chief Child  
Health Officer

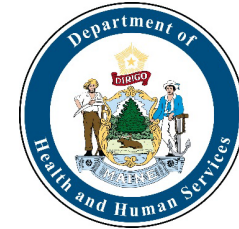
Amy.Belisle@maine.gov



---

## Office of Child and Family Services

*Angie Bellefleur*, Help  
Me Grow Project  
Manager,  
Angie.Bellefleur@  
maine.gov



---

## Maine CDC

*Maryann Harakall*,  
MCH Program Director,  
Maryann.Harakall@  
maine.gov

*Ashley Olen, RN*  
ECCS Project Manager  
Ashley.Olen@maine.gov

# Three Background Videos on Help Me Grow



- [Help Me Grow Video Overview \(14 min\)](#)
- [15 min Ted Talk on HMG by Dr. Dworkin](#) who founded HMG
- [5 min parent video on HMG](#)