



center for  
**CHILDREN & YOUTH**  
JUSTICE | *Changing the arc of a young person's future*



## Strengthening Early Relationships June 2021 | [Webpage](#)

A monthly newsletter to share updates and resources about expanding the Safe Babies Court Team™ (SBCT) approach in Washington State.

*Strengthening Early Relationships is a portfolio of work at the Center for Children & Youth Justice (CCYJ). CCYJ's mission to create better lives for generations of children and youth by reforming the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.*



## Legislative Success!

**2SSB 5331 has been signed into WA law!** We are excited to share that [2SSB 5331](#) successfully made its way through this legislative session! On May 12, Governor Inslee signed 2SSB 5331 into law, effective 7/25/21.

2SSB 5331 creates a statewide standard of practice for early childhood court programs, putting racial equity, parent voice, relationships, and safe reunification at the forefront of practice and service delivery. The passage of this bill into law is a necessary and promising step in our work toward creating a more equitable, holistic systems response for infants, toddlers, and their families in the child welfare system.

We want to again share our deep gratitude for the dedicated support you provided throughout this session. It has been inspiring to see the momentum across our state in favor of this bill. 2SSB 5331 could not have passed out of the legislature without this amazing group of advocates. **THANK YOU!**

# SBCT Updates

## Site Updates

**Spokane is serving their first Baby Court case!** Spokane County formally launched their Baby Court in May and has already welcomed their first family into the court program. Spokane continues to engage with their local community partners to streamline collaborative efforts and service delivery.



Thurston and Kitsap Counties have both experienced staffing changes with their Community Coordinators and are in the process of hiring for the positions. Both teams have met significant milestones in SBCT rollout and are eager to take cases once their Community Coordinator is hired and trained.

The Pierce County Best for Babies Program met with their Community Advisory Team this month, highlighting the importance of engaging and supporting fathers who are dependency-involved, expecting, or incarcerated. The work of a local Fatherhood Engagement program was presented, which [can be viewed here](#). *If you would like to subscribe to weekly Best for Babies updates, please contact Julie Hoffman at [Julie@amarafamily.org](mailto:Julie@amarafamily.org).*

**HRSA grant funding has been extended!** We have been notified that the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) funding will be extended for one year. This means that the awards granted to sites (Kitsap, Thurston, Spokane, and Pierce Counties) will be renewed for an additional year, from September 2021-22.

**Development of the WA Safe Babies State Advisory Board continues.** Working in collaboration with ZTT, the purpose and key responsibilities of the Board have been established, and we expect to engage potential members later this summer. The WA Safe Babies State Advisory Board is a high-level, decision-making group that spans the state's child welfare system and community partners, leveraging their expertise in early childhood services to inform the state's SBCT efforts. Equity, reunification, and parent empowerment will be centered throughout the Board's efforts.

---



# Resource Hub

## Upcoming Events

[Reach Out and Read Next Chapter: Learning the Vital Signs of Early Relational Health](#)

**When:** Wednesday, June 16 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM PDT

**About:** Panelists will discuss the development of an initial set of training modules and materials for ROR pediatricians about observing autonomic emotional connection as learned from the key elements within the Welch Emotional Connection Scale (WECS). These observations have opened groundbreaking discussions about how ROR pediatricians can partner with families to support their foundational relationships as pediatric care moves toward advancing "relationships as a vital sign."

[How Safe Babies Court Teams are Helping Parents Build Protective Factors](#)

**When:** Wednesday, Jun 18, 10:00 AM PDT

**About:** Explore how ITCP sites are using the Strengthening Families approach in their work to increase protective factors. Community Coordinators from ITCP sites will provide specific case examples of how they have implemented this approach into their work with families.

[Show+Tell: Equity & Justice in Early Childhood](#)

**When:** July 13 and July 27, 2021

**About:** Over two events, you'll connect with 20+ social entrepreneurs and experts to learn about the unique ways they are advancing equity and justice in early childhood. These events will focus on Birth Equity & Justice (7/13) and Equity & Justice in Early Care & Education (7/27).

[Save the Date! ZERO TO THREE Annual Conference 2021](#)

**When:** October 25-29, 2021

**About:** Registration to this conference opens in June. Join ZERO TO THREE's Annual Conference 2021 mailing list and get the latest updates and promotions for this year's conference by clicking the link above.

## Listen

[The New Neighborhood](#), a limited series podcast, explores some of the dramatic changes taking place across the country as people work to reinforce a sense of community, support young children and families, and work to build equity within communities. Each episode features emerging innovations that will create a society where all children and their families can thrive.

**New Episode:** [ConnectFirst Starting with Families During Pregnancy](#)

**About:** Learn how early childhood leaders in Tulsa are disrupting intergenerational poverty by connecting with families starting in pregnancy through BEST (Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa).

## Read

[Racism Creates Inequities in Maternal and Child Health, Even Before Birth](#)

**About:** Whether infants and toddlers are born healthy and with the potential to thrive as they grow greatly depends on their mother's well-being – not just before birth, but even prior to conception. This new policy brief, developed in partnership with Child Trends, applies a targeted racial and ethnic equity lens and lays out recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to promote equity and improve maternal and child health.

---

# Interested in Learning More?



For more information on the SBCT Approach and the current work expanding it to Washington State, visit our newly updated [website](#) or send us an [email](#).

## CCYJ Website

Strengthening Early Relationships:

Expanding the Safe Babies Court Team Approach in Washington State

<https://ccyj.org/our-work/designing-a-washington-state-safe-babies-plan/>

## Contact

Michelle Williams (She/Her)

[mwilliams@ccyj.org](mailto:mwilliams@ccyj.org)

*You are receiving this email because you are on our Safe Babies Design Team listserv. If you would like to unsubscribe to this mailing list, please let me know.*