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# Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee

November 19th, 2025

2:00-4:00PM

Room 1E in the LOB

ZOOM Option Available

Scan to submit your attendance





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# Meeting Facilitation

## Mute on Zoom

- Participants must remain muted on Zoom unless speaking

## Hand Raising

- Virtual attendees should use the Hand Raise feature on Zoom for questions and comments

## Questions at the End

- Hold questions and comments until the presenters have finished speaking

## TCB only

- Only TCB members may ask questions and make comments

## Recording

- This meeting is being recorded



# Agenda

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**Welcoming, Opening Remarks**

TCB Tri Chairs: Senator Ceci Maher, Representative Tammy Exum and Claudio Gualtieri, Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary, OPM

**Review and Acceptance  
of October Minutes**

**Special Session Overview and Updates**

TCB Tri Chairs: Senator Ceci Maher, Representative Tammy Exum and Claudio Gualtieri, Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary, OPM

**Administrative Updates**

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**Workgroup Updates**

TCB Workgroup Co-chairs: Jenny Bridges; Yann Poncin, MD, Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs in the Child Study Center; Alice Forrester, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Clifford Beers Community Health Partners & Jason Lang, PhD, Chief Program Officer, CHDI; Ingrid Gillespie, Director of Prevention, Liberation Programs Inc & Pamela Mautte, Director, Alliance for Prevention and Wellness Program of BH Healthcare, and Howard Sovronsky, Behavioral Health Advocate

**Rural Health Transformation Grant Update**

Nick Turcotte, Principal Lead, Rural Health Grant Transformation Program, OPM ; Joel Norwood, Deputy Policy Advisor, DSS and Dr. Mehul Dalal, Chief Policy Advisor, DSS

**futuresTHRIVE – Mental Health Screening  
Tool Overview/Presentation**

Wendy Ward, Founder, futuresTHRIVE; Dr. Fran Leof, and Dr. Patricia Gail Bray, Founding Director, David and Helen Gurley Brown BridgeUp at Menninger Center at the Menninger Clinic

**Q&A**

TCB Tri Chairs: Senator Ceci Maher, Representative Tammy Exum and Claudio Gualtieri, Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary, OPM

**Closing Remarks**





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# Special Session Overview/ Updates



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# HB 8004 passed during Special Session!

HB 8004, a bill including the TCB's legislation, *An Act Concerning Children's Behavioral Health*, passed during the Connecticut Special Session. Earlier today, Governor Lamont signed the bill.

## **Overview of TCB's recommendations included in HB 8004:**

- A review of the Crisis Continuum to evaluate the utilization of services, marketing efforts, and patient referrals
- A UCC Private Insurance Review, led by the Behavioral Health Advocate
- Increased insurance coverages from ages 21 to 26 for ABA and cognitive therapies in individuals with ASD
- A SBHC Study in collaboration with DPH and CASBHC to develop standardized reporting requirements
- IICAPS model development in collaboration with DSS, additionally, the TCB will partner with the Yale Child Study Center to conduct a Quasi Experimental Study to distinguish IICAPS as evidence based
- Appointment of two providers of substance use and the Behavioral Health Advocate to the TCB

HB 8004 can be found in the November TCB Meeting Materials OneDrive.



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# Administrative Updates



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# Looking Ahead – TCB Meeting Updates

- The December TCB meeting, currently scheduled on **December 3rd, from 2-4PM**, will be focused on Crisis Continuum Data – including UCC, Mobile Crisis, Subacute Stabilization Data, and ED Hospital Data
- More details will come regarding the CVW Summit, aimed to be held in **February**, the morning of the February TCB Meeting. Please be on the lookout for further information.
- The TCB will vote on legislative recommendations during the **February** TCB Meeting. The 2026 Session will begin **February 4th**.



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# Workgroup Updates

- TCB Workgroups have been regularly meeting once a month since April of 2025. Workgroups have been following their workplans that were presented to the committee in March of 2025 and are incorporated into the strategic plan.
- Subgroups, such as the Crisis Continuum Review have begun as a result of the legislation TCB approved in January of 2025.

## **Workgroups:**

- Community Voices
- Services
- System Infrastructure
- Prevention
- School-Based

## **Subgroups:**

- Crisis Continuum Review/ UCC Communications



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# CVW Updates

## Priorities:

- ☐ Evaluate what is happening in schools, what services and supports are provided for children and families across CT from a youth and parent perspective
- ☐ Identify what resources are available for children and families after receiving behavioral health treatment or services
- ☐ Evaluating family and youth support options and initiatives in CT
- ☐ Promote culturally competent care (peer to peer services, Community Health Workers (CHWs)) and distribute their resources to the community
- ☐ Engage children and their families in TCB work; transformational engagement with the community

## Overview of 2025 Meetings:

The workgroup kicked off in September with the CVW Orientation, where members were provided an overview of their roles as members, and background of the TCB work. In October, the CVW held a CVW Summit, facilitated by Health Equity Solutions, where the group discussed the power of lived experience, power dynamics, and discussed the CVW Workplan and goals for the group. The "part two" of the summit will take place in February prior to the February TCB meeting with committee members.



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# Services Workgroup Updates

*Workgroup Co-Chairs: Edith Boyle, LCSW, President and Chief Executive Officer, LifeBridge Community Services & Yann Poncin, MD, Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs in the Child Study Center*

## **Priorities:**

The identified priorities include peer-to-peer support and 211 services. The workgroup will monitor the TCB recommendations related to the crisis continuum, UCC's and IICAPs. The workgroup additionally receives updates on the TCB's Children's Behavioral Health Survey monthly.

## **Overview of 2025 Meetings:**

The workgroup has had various presentations and discussions in 2025 including presentations on Peer to Peer, Evidence Based Practices in Children's Behavioral Health, an overview of the CT Substance Use Services Array, and IICAPS. The workgroup will meet in December, where CHDI will present the findings of their Peer to Peer Study, as well as have UConn Innovations provide updates on the TCB's Children's Behavioral Health Survey.



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# System Infrastructure Workgroup Updates

*Workgroup Co Chairs: Alice Forrester, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Clifford Beers Community Health Partners & Jason Lang, PhD, Chief Program Officer, CHDI*

## **Priorities:**

Priorities identified are systems of care models and public children's behavioral health data (access, quality & outcomes).

## **Overview of 2025 Meetings:**

The workgroup has had various presentations around systems of care, systems of care history in CT, Improving Child, Youth, and Family Mental Health Through Systems of Care (SOC), and in the November meeting, had a presentation on the New Jersey's System Of Care. The workgroup will further assess both UConn Innovations Reports, including the Governance Fact Sheets, and Behavioral Health Data Infrastructure report.



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# Prevention Workgroup Updates

*Workgroup Co Chairs: Ingrid Gillespie, Director of Prevention, Liberation Programs Inc & Pamela Mautte, Director, Alliance for Prevention & Wellness Program of BH Healthcare*

## **Priorities:**

- ❑ Preventing substance use and overdose by promoting evidence-based strategies and addressing emerging trends.
- ❑ Evaluating how to expand access to suicide prevention and behavioral health services to facilitate early intervention and reduce crises.
- ❑ Promoting resilience and emotional well-being through education, community engagement, and policy advocacy.
- ❑ Integrating behavioral and physical health care to create a more cohesive, accessible, and effective support system.
- ❑ Embedding brief screenings in healthcare, including trauma screenings, schools, and community programs to improve early identification, build social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, reinforce positive choices, and connect individuals to appropriate supports.

## **Overview of 2025 Meetings:**

The workgroup has had various presentations, including an Overview of Preventative Services from DMHAS, an Overview of SEPI-CT from DMHAS, Mental Health Screening in Early Childhood, and has developed a "Prevention Report Card" and will utilize the results from the TCB Children's Behavioral Health Survey to fill out the report card.



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# School Based Workgroup Updates

*Workgroup Co Chairs: Dr. Elizabeth Connors, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Division of Prevention and Community Research, Yale School of Medicine & Katerina Vlahos, Executive Director, Bridgeport Prospers*

## **Priorities Identified In the Workplan:**

- School Based Health Center Study
- School Based Behavioral Health Billing Recommendation
- TBD with input from community

## **Overview of 2025 Meetings:**

The workgroup has had various discussions regarding the legislation allocated to the workgroup, including the School Based Behavioral Health Billing recommendation, and School Based Health Center Recommendation. The workgroup in October, had a presentation from the Birch Center, on Massachusetts Medicaid Billing Practices in Schools. Additionally, the workgroup has begun developing a School Mental Health Infographic.



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# Crisis Continuum Review / UCC Marketing and Utilization

*Led by Howard Sovronsky, Behavioral Health Advocate*

## Crisis Continuum Review

The subgroup will lead the efforts of the Crisis Continuum Recommendation TCB put forth in the 2025 session. The subgroup includes CHDI, DCF, the Services Workgroup Co-chairs and UnitedWay.

The group has been meeting over the past few months to evaluate utilization data of crisis services, including 211/Mobile Crisis Data, ED Hospitalization Data, UCC Data, and Subacute Stabilization Data. Presentations aligned with this work will be presented next month at the December TCB Meeting.

## UCC Communications

The Behavioral Health Advocate, along with DCF, and the community based UCC'S have been meeting to discuss ways of increasing utilization at the three UCCs. Targeted communication strategies as well as plans for customized community conversations in each region are being pursued as a way of promoting and educating community members on crisis services including UCC's.

This work is aligned with the Crisis Continuum Review and was identified as a first step to increase utilization a critical component on a long-range sustainability plan for the UCCs.



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# Rural Health Transformation Grant Program

**Nick Turcotte, Research Analyst, Office of Policy and Management, Joel Norwood, Deputy Policy Advisor, DSS & Dr. Mehul Dalal, Chief Policy Advisor, DSS**



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# FuturesThrive: Mental Health Screening Tool

***Wendy Ward, Founder, CEO, FuturesThrive; Dr. Fran Leof, and Dr. Patricia Gail Bray, Founding Director, David and Helen Gurley Brown BridgeUp at Menninger Center at the Menninger Clinic***



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# Next Meeting: December 3rd, 2025