President’s Letter: WCAAP in 2023

In 2023, WCAAP celebrated a year of financial growth, innovative partnerships, and big wins for children, families, and pediatric providers. WCAAP members are trusted voices championing the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in Washington State and beyond. As the report highlights, pediatricians, pediatric providers, and our amazing staff feel justifiably proud to share in the progress we’ve achieved working together.

Highlights of our accomplishments include 1) WCAAP’s growing role as a convener of parents, children, and organizations looking out for kids; 2) highlights of member impact; and 3) our shared role in caring for each other – pediatric providers and WCAAP staff who make this work possible.

WCAAP broadened the chorus of voices speaking for kids. We enrolled more pediatric providers than ever before in chapter work. Committee turnout was robust, including statewide kudos for the innovative work of the Equity Committee in promoting Equitable Care webinars across WA. On the advocacy front, WCAAP members testified, wrote letters and emails, met with legislators in living rooms, joined Zoom sessions, and showed up in offices, schools, and community meetings. Our 2023 legislative wins and momentum led to record member engagement and impactful advocacy efforts for the 2024 legislative session (read our 2024 Advocacy Report here!). Notable accomplishments include a sizeable increase in funding for FAST mental health training and resources, $20mn in loan repayment for WA Health Corps and behavioral health, free school meals for all kids in K-8 schools where one in three students qualifies for free or reduced lunch, and a ban on assault weapons.

In September, the WCAAP board and staff gathered to draft a multi-year strategic plan, identifying overarching goals and specific strategies that include advancing the health of children, teens, and families, advancing the professional and personal well-being of our members, and strengthening Chapter administration to fulfill our joint mission. The strategic plan will guide future work, add transparency, and broaden recruitment efforts to lend new perspectives and voices to leadership, including a process for adding parents/caregivers to our board.

We doubled down on ways to actively care for each other in our rewarding and challenging jobs. The Board voted to fund health insurance for WCAAP staff in 2024 as a top priority, and in concert with Executive Director leadership, ensured the financial health of the Chapter, growing to a nearly two-million-dollar organization, and safeguarding our solvency as we continue to grow. To support our expanding programmatic efforts, this year WCAAP hired additional staff, bringing our robust and talented team to a total of 7 full-time and 3 part-time employees, including new expertise in financial management, grant writing, communications, and data collection and visualization. We will continue to advocate for each of you so that you have the financial resources, community support, and fellowship of your colleagues to continue your amazing work each day as a trusted partner for families and respected leaders speaking up for caregivers, children, and adolescents.

I am grateful to the WCAAP board, committees, staff, and especially to each of you for your support, time, insight, and dedication which forged this progress. Together we are building a strong foundation for the years ahead. I hope each of you gets a few moments to celebrate the incredibly positive impact of your work on Washington children and families. The WCAAP Board and I are honored to represent you as we continue along this journey together.

Beth Ebel, MD, MSc, MPH, FAAP
President, Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Our Vision

We promote health and wellness for all children, adolescents, and families and advance equitable, evidence-based, collaborative approaches to pediatric care.

Our Mission

We champion the health and well-being of children, adolescents, and families through advocacy, education, and partnership.

Core Values

Equity

Advocacy

Collaboration
We’re making it better.

Childhood is a time for wonder, not worry. For curiosity and bumping up against obstacles. When those obstacles land kids in our care, we’re here to make it better—no matter the challenge.
Advancing Equitable Care

In 2021, WCAAP’s Equity Committee of diverse pediatric primary care and specialty providers across Washington produced the Chapter’s Equitable Health Care Toolkit. To ensure the Toolkit’s ongoing use and visibility, WCAAP hosts quarterly webinars; 280 providers attended WCAAP’s 2023 equity webinars live including topics related to inequities in access in rural Washington, building trust with parents, EHR design, and environmental justice. Due to the incredible caliber of resources and quality of the webinars, access to equitable care opportunities and events remains a top interest for our members.

WCAAP also facilitated four hands-on learning cohorts with providers across WA to improve participants’ self-awareness about equity and make measurable changes in their daily work with patients. GATHER (Generate and Teach Health Equity Routinely™) is a learning collaborative created by Seattle Children’s Hospital to address biases and improve health equity through peer conversation. In 2022, Seattle Children’s trained four WCAAP community pediatricians to become GATHER facilitators, who then adapted the curriculum to community settings. With their leadership, WCAAP brought GATHER to 31 providers from 9 counties, including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, counselors, and school nurses in 2023.

After participating in GATHER, providers’ self-report of taking specific steps to break down health equity barriers for patients improved by 20%.

“GATHER training plays a vital role in improving the medical care I deliver by fostering cultural competence, addressing biases, reducing disparities, and promoting patient-centered and equitable healthcare practices. By integrating equity principles into my practice, in a very practical way, I hope the healthcare system can become more inclusive, compassionate, and effective for all individuals.”

- Ezekiel Melquist, MD
Legislative Advocacy

WCAAP’s strength in advocacy continued in 2023 with members sending over 600 messages to legislators in 40 of the state’s 49 legislative districts. Nearly 80 members from across the state returned to Olympia in person for our annual Advocacy Day just 2 weeks into the session, helping us achieve early momentum and attention with legislators. As a “long session” during which the legislature drafts and passes the state’s biennial budget, WCAAP was able to successfully advocate for several budget wins including:

- Increased funding for Washington’s Mental Health Referral Service for Children & Teens and First Approach Skills Training (FAST).
- 15% increase in Behavioral Health reimbursement on Medicaid.
- $10m in loan repayment for behavioral health professionals.
- Continued salary support and training for pediatric Community Health Workers, including a learning collaborative facilitated by WCAAP.
- Free school meals for an additional 90,000 students in elementary and K-8 public schools.

Additionally, over 20 bills we supported in the 2023 legislative session passed, including:

**Safe Communities**
- Regulation of THC products
- Required education and extended waiting periods to purchase firearms
- Prohibition of assault weapons

**Access To Care**
- Protecting access to reproductive health care and gender-affirming treatment
- Prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and support for prenatal substance exposure
- Insurance coverage for hearing aids

**Healthy Environments to Grow**
- Improving access to childcare programs
- Sufficient recess for elementary students
- Support for youth seeking housing
- Improving the state’s climate change planning framework

WCAAP also honored Representative Paul Harris with the second annual “David Frockt Child Advocacy Award.” Bipartisan legislators, public health officials, and the state Attorney General joined WCAAP at the Capitol to recognize Representative Harris for 13 years of advocacy for child and adolescent health, including passing Tobacco-21 and eliminating personal exemptions for the measles vaccine.
Arcora Foundation leads with equity and centers our work in oral health to ensure everyone can achieve good oral and overall health. We:

• Work with individuals and groups to prevent oral disease.
• Ensure everyone can access oral health care when and where they need it.

Through partnerships, we can achieve our mission to bend the arc of oral health toward equity.

To learn more about how we can support you through preventive oral health services, contact Madlen Caplow, mcaplow@arcorafoundation.org.
Transforming Care for Kids’ Mental Health and Family Well-Being

WCAAP members work alongside the Health Care Authority, Accountable Communities of Health, and state-level committees to inform the investments needed for primary care to impact child and adolescent health more effectively. While financing holistic care for kids remains an aspiration, we made strides in transforming primary care by advancing:

- team-based, integrated care, including mental health professionals in primary care and access to psychiatric expertise, and
- workforce extenders like Community Health Workers.

Community Health Workers in Pediatric Primary Care

In 2022 WCAAP successfully advocated for a state-funded pilot of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in primary care. In early 2023, a workforce of 50 pediatric CHWs began to support relational health, development, social/financial needs, and access to mental health care. Today 30 clinics, including 7 tribes, employ pediatric CHWs through this program.

CHWs play an integral role in strengthening parent-child bonds and addressing behavioral health needs for children and teens by facilitating timely access to mental health care, addressing families’ social needs, and enhancing the quality and cultural competency of care.

“I think our job is essential. Not only for the patients, but for the doctors as well.”
- Community Health Worker

As this new workforce formed, WCAAP facilitated four days of in-person training (and four online educational sessions) led by incumbent CHWs, pediatric faculty, and partners to provide the new CHWs knowledge and skills in pediatrics, child development, mental health, motivational interviewing, and navigating schools and child welfare. In September, WCAAP also began providing monthly case-based learning calls for CHWs to learn from each other, facilitated by expert pediatric and mental health faculty.

Additionally, WCAAP is leading a learning collaborative for multidisciplinary teams in 11 primary care clinics with pediatric CHWs to improve role clarity and team integration. Participating clinics receive technical assistance and coaching, regular data about their site’s progress, and a peer learning space to address challenges, and share resources and lessons learned. Participating CHWs have reported substantial improvements in role acceptance and team integration, as well as smaller improvements in job satisfaction and workload. In 2024-2025, WCAAP plans to continue to support the CHWs’ professional development and skills in evidence-based strategies to improve and promote mental health for children and teens of all ages.
Behavioral Health Integration in Primary Care

In 2022 WCAAP members advocated for and secured $2 million in funding from the state for 10 primary care clinics to build behavioral health integration for children and teens. This year, with philanthropic funding, WCAAP has provided these clinics with extra support through our Behavioral Health Integration (BHI) Learning Network. Our faculty, including pediatricians, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, and two mental health professionals -- all with years of experience in BHI--provided clinics with technical assistance and education.

Meeting monthly, this network connects providers and clinic managers from across the state to build out BHI plans within their clinics, learn best practices in establishing a high-functioning team, population-based screening, registries, psychopharmacology, billing, and supporting health-related social needs.

Looking ahead, WCAAP will continue its strong presence with the state Medicaid agency and the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Work Group to continue to spread BHI for kids and establish sustainable financing for BHI in pediatric primary care and family medicine.
Mary Bridge Children's is here for your patients — and for you.

Mary Bridge Children's dedicated specialty pediatric care — from our level II pediatric trauma center and transport team to comprehensive outpatient care — helps keep your patients closer to home. Our board-certified pediatric experts are committed to partnering with you to give your patients the care they need, when and where they need it. Thank you for trusting your patients to our care.

marybridge.org/refer

Regional Outpatient Locations:
Covington • Federal Way • Gig Harbor • Olympia • Puyallup • Silverdale • Tacoma
Established in 2019, the **Washington Child Health Improvement Partnership (WA-CHIP)** is our framework to improve child and teen health on the front lines of clinics and inform policy solutions that benefit children, teens, and families. Led by WCAAP, our partnership includes the Washington State Department of Health, Public Health – Seattle & King County, the University of Washington, Seattle Children’s Hospital, and community pediatricians. Two steering committees lead the partnership:

- **First Year Families Steering Committee** –
  Leads efforts to promote early relational health and family well-being for our state’s youngest children, ages 0-5 years old.

- **Champions for Youth Steering Committee** –
  Leads efforts to improve preventive care and well-being for kids in grades K-12.

### WA-CHIP: First Year Families

#### Promoting Equity in Developmental Screening and Early Intervention

There are striking disparities in the timely identification of developmental needs and receipt of early intervention for children in households that speak a language other than English. **WCAAP conducted one-on-one interviews with Spanish-speaking parents** as well as Family Navigators to learn how to improve parent partnerships with providers and support parents with limited English proficiency in developmental screenings and timely access to early intervention services.

WCAAP then brought strategies for supporting families to our provider community via a live webinar (available on WCAAP’s website) and curated resources (also on WCAAP’s website) to promote universal developmental screening and early intervention services with families from diverse cultures.

WCAAP has been working in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Health to increase provider awareness of Strong Start – Washington’s Universal Developmental Screening System. The Strong Start system allows providers to enter and track developmental screening results, see the history of screenings, and avoid unnecessary duplicate screenings. In 2023, WCAAP worked with two clinics, Sea Mar Bellingham and Sea Mar South Park, to make the Strong Start System more accessible and usable for providers.
Transforming Care for Early Relational Health

Through a national effort called Pediatrics Supporting Parents, WCAAP, in close partnership with Pediatrics Northwest, was among five US cities/regions selected to help transform primary care to better support parents and families of 0-3-year-olds. In 2023, Pediatrics Northwest identified and implemented model practices in service delivery for Early Relational Health, and WCAAP helped foster state funding and clinic-facing supports to transform care statewide. Outcomes include WCAAP integrating parents into our organizational leadership and supporting a new statewide workforce of pediatric Community Health Workers for Early Relational Health.

First Year Families Summit: Strong Families, Early Supports

In September 2023, WCAAP convened 40 thought leaders including statewide agency leaders, parents, providers, and partners in maternal and child health to advance our State’s Early Childhood Comprehensive System goals. With a framework created by WCAAP and WA DOH, participants identified existing programs that could be sustained and scaled to maximize impact in the following domains:

- Remodel Care Delivery
- Coordinate Within and Across Systems
- Strengthen Community-Based Supports
- Enhance System Leadership and Cross-Sector Collaboration
- Advance Supportive Health Policy and Financing

“I love the enthusiasm of everyone to create policy change and make sure health care providers and workers are reimbursed for the incredible work they do. This space gave me hope for a better future in the healthcare pediatrics arena.”

- Summit Attendee

In 2024, WCAAP will continue the conversations that began at the First Year Families Summit. Supporting families from the beginning in close coordination with our partners is key to improving health and well-being outcomes in early childhood and beyond.
Champions for Youth facilitates involvement, collaboration, and information-sharing among Washington schools, primary care, community-based organizations, and public health leaders to positively impact preventive healthcare, and family, child, and teen well-being. Highlights from 2023 include:

- Hosting an in-person summit in November with over 30 attendees, including a youth panel, establishing the committee’s 2024 focus on increasing reliable relationships and communication tools between schools and primary care.

  "This was a great platform to share thoughts and ideas on adolescent and young adult health and leave with the comfort of knowing I was heard."

  - Youth Panelist

- Power in Partnership promoted local partnerships between schools, clinics, and local health jurisdictions, including outreach to over 90 individuals in 22 counties, resulting in local and regional efforts to improve child health such as:

  ◊ A school nurse workgroup formed in Thurston County to understand how to improve coordination with pediatric/family medicine,

  ◊ The creation of an immunization workgroup with the Tri-County Health District.

  ◊ Facilitating an in-person listening session of Spokane-area school nurses, pediatric and family medicine providers, and local public health staff to discuss strategies for improving immunization rates in the region.
Improving Coordination for Children and Teens with Chronic Conditions

WCAAP worked with primary care providers, public health, and school nurses in Skagit County to advance chronic condition management for children and teens in school. After WCAAP conducted a brief needs assessment, including six parent interviews (in Spanish, Mixtec, and Russian), school nurses, counselors, hospital systems, pediatricians, and Skagit County Health met quarterly to improve standards of care and communication. Additionally, two educational sessions, one on ADHD and another on diabetes, were presented to school nurses and other stakeholders to improve skills and care coordination in chronic care management.

Empowering Youth Health Promoters

For the second year, WCAAP staff worked with ninth-grade students in their biology class at Foss High School in Tacoma to create projects highlighting the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine to combat misinformation and boost vaccine literacy and vaccination rates. Ten students and their projects were chosen to participate in a professionally filmed and edited social media campaign. The PSA videos, which featured four different languages (English, Spanish, Swahili, and Ukrainian) were shared on WCAAP’s YouTube Channel and social media pages.

“It’s important for everyone to know about COVID and the dangers of getting it and for them to know how getting the vaccine can help you”

Lucy M, Foss High School Student

Screenshots of Foss High School student COVID-19 PSA video campaigns
WA-CHIP: Immunizations

WA-CHIP Childhood and Adolescent Immunizations Learning Collaborative

With strong support from WA DOH, Best Starts for Kids, and physician partners at Seattle Children’s Hospital, WCAAP completed its fourth year helping clinics from across the state improve vaccination rates. In 2023, the WA-CHIP immunizations collaborative served 12 clinics in 5 counties, totaling nearly 33,000 Washington children and teens, with participating clinics reducing missed vaccination opportunities for children and adolescents by 13%. WCAAP led the cohort with an equity lens, helping clinics to identify healthcare gaps for their patient population by race, ethnicity, and language. With this equity focus, WCAAP helped clinics make even greater improvements for Hispanic children, decreasing their missed opportunities by 19%.

“Learning from other clinics has helped us with morale. When we are down staff, communication across the team helps us keep our focus on immunizations.”
– Valley View Health Center

Collaborating with the Somali Health Board to Address Vaccine Hesitancy

In partnership with the Somali Health Board and two trusted Somali providers, WCAAP interviewed six Somali families to gather input about their beliefs about vaccines. WCAAP and the Somali Health Board then used that information to produce webinars for families and providers:

• Two community-based webinars (available on the Somali Health Board’s Facebook page) in Somali to educate, debunk myths, provide a safe space for questions, share vaccine resources, and

• A webinar for providers (available on WCAAP’s website) to share the information learned from families about vaccine hesitancy, including the benefits of a strong recommendation and taking time to answer questions as essential to building trust with Somali families.
HPV at 9 Immunization Learning Collaborative

In 2023, with support from the AAP, Wellpoint (formerly Amerigroup), and DOH, WCAAP launched a rapid QI project to help primary care clinics make a simple but powerful change to their HPV vaccination workflow – starting the vaccine at age 9 instead of 11. HPV vaccine at 9 is considered best practice and is proven to increase on-time vaccination rates by the 13th birthday, as opposed to starting at age 11.

Through this initiative, WCAAP reached 20 clinics in 9 counties (14 of these clinics serve rural communities), 118 providers, and roughly 16,000 9-10 and 11-12-year-olds—reaching 4% of WA state youth!

All cohorts started the project with median coverage rates (of 9-10-year-olds who had received at least the initial HPV dose) below the state average, and upon completion of the intervention, finished above the state average and continued to increase after their cohort ended.

- **Cohort One (5 months):**
  Increased coverage rates by median 11% points and at the 1-year post-intervention mark, increased by median 26% points.

- **Cohort Two-A (6 months):**
  Increased coverage rates by median 17%

Additionally, 100% of providers also indicated a change in workflow to now recommend HPV at age 9 instead of age 11, up from 19% at baseline.

"The webinar addressing hesitancy in rural areas hit the nail on the head." – Medical Assistant
The region’s best care team for kids in the Pacific Northwest.

Thanks to the world-class team at Seattle Children’s, kids like Aisley can get back to living (and dancing) like no one’s watching. Seattle Children’s is the top-ranked pediatric hospital in the Pacific Northwest and the only pediatric hospital ranked in Washington by U.S. News & World Report. With an emphasis on compassionate care and cutting-edge research driven by a relentless search for cures, we are dedicated to providing hope for every child to live the healthiest and most fulfilling life possible.
We Are Grateful

Thank you to our 2023 supporters! Your generosity enables us to continue our work to make Washington a better place for children and families:

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Molina Healthcare
MultiCare Health System
WithinReach
Nesholm Family Foundation
### Year Ending 12/31/23

## Financial Report

### Revenue

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<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Dues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsorships, Contributions, Other</td>
<td>$120,832</td>
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**Total 2023 Revenue:** $2,165,626

### Expenses

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<td>Fundraising Expenses</td>
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**Total 2023 Expenses:** $2,192,499

### Statement of Financial Position

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<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
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**Liabilities and Net Assets**

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<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
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**Total Liabilities and Net Assets:** $893,974

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The Executive Director, CFO, and Treasurer develop the annual budget informed by business planning with the executive committee and committee leadership. The board approves the annual budget and reviews a financial dashboard monthly. Any significant budget variances are discussed during executive committee and board meetings. At year-end, any remaining grant funding is carried forward to the next year and any general operating surpluses go into reserves.