

Family Health Committee Meeting Notes September 9th, 2025 – 11:00am to 12:00pm

Committee Chairs – Lidiya Lednyak

Staff Liaison – Grace Dawson

Agenda Item	Discussion
Welcome/Introductions	Grace Dawson opened the meeting and initiated the agenda, inviting updates from the regional Early Intervention (EI) and Preschool Coalitions.
Regional EI/Preschool Coalitions Report Out	Grace invited coalition representatives to share updates from their local/regional meetings. No members raised items to report at this time.
Fiscal Workgroup Report Out	Grace shared notes from the August 26 Fiscal Workgroup in the chat and confirmed they will also be attached to the meeting calendar invite. No additional member updates were provided. Questions can be sent to Grace for follow-up with BEI (Bureau of Early Intervention) or PCG (Public Consulting Group).
NYS Maternal Health Innovation Taskforce	The planned report (by Linda) did not occur because she was not present.
School Health	<p>Free Care Act was highlighted by Lidiya Lednyak and Anthony Faciane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This federal change allows Medicaid billing for services provided in schools to children without IEPs. A pending State Plan Amendment (SPA) at NYSDOH would authorize participation, but progress has been slow. Current draft SPA only included behavioral health, which stakeholders felt was too limited. Counties could opt in voluntarily, creating a new potential revenue stream. Only 12 states nationwide have implemented this. Members discussed potential advocacy through NYSACHO to push for broader service inclusion. <p>Action: Anthony will send Grace one-pagers explaining the Free Care rule for committee distribution. Follow-up scheduled for the next meeting.</p>
ABA Services	<p>Issue raised by Donna Bogin (Rockland County): A new agency is approved to provide <i>only</i> ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) services, but there is no clear guidance from NYSDOH on how municipalities should authorize and bill these services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, many counties place ABA under “Special Instruction” (SI) if delivered by other licensed professionals. Concerns: unclear rules, parent expectations for 20–40 hours/week of ABA, and confusion around IFSP implementation. <p>Discussion highlights:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lidiya: NYS Education clarified that only LBAs (Licensed Behavior Analysts), BCBAs, and potentially RBTs may formally provide “ABA services,” though other clinicians may use ABA methodology within their scope.• Members debated whether a formal autism diagnosis should be required for ABA authorization (mixed practices across counties).• Jennifer (Suffolk): Shared local challenges with LBAs, plan amendments, and hub system burdens.• Debate over whether RBTs (Registered Behavior Technicians) should be approved:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pros: could expand capacity, especially upstate.○ Cons: RBTs often have only a high school diploma, raising concerns about supervision, clinical quality, and liability.• Upstate members reported no ABA services available through EI in multiple counties (Monroe, Oswego, Franklin, St. Lawrence, Tompkins, Saratoga, Washington, etc.). Many families rely on insurance-funded RBTs instead.• Downstate (NYC/Long Island) reported the opposite—oversupply of ABA providers but limited motor therapy. <p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee will raise to BEI: the need for clearer guidance on ABA authorization, clarification of LBAs vs. methodology by other professionals, and whether RBTs can be safely integrated.• They will also seek a statewide capacity analysis on where ABA services are authorized and whether RBTs would meaningfully expand access in underserved regions.
Ideas for Reimagining EI	<p>Context: Upcoming state budget cycle expected to be difficult; members discussed structural reforms to make EI more efficient and sustainable.</p> <p>Ideas raised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Primary Provider / Transdisciplinary Model<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ One generalist provider delivers most services for a child with support from other specialists.▪ Piloted in Suffolk, Westchester, Monroe, and Ontario in past years but faced parent/provider resistance.▪ Aligns with federal EI intent but state-level guidance has not supported it.▪ Workforce training and licensure barriers remain.2. Change Ongoing Eligibility Standards<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Align ongoing eligibility with initial eligibility (higher threshold).▪ Current standards are so low that many children never exit EI, creating capacity strain.3. Reevaluate Clinical Practice Guidelines<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Members noted guidelines can drive high service hours (especially ABA), straining provider availability.▪ Suggestion to revisit or eliminate guidelines that contribute to inequities in access.4. Leverage CPSE Evaluations



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider using preschool special education (CPSE) evaluation results to determine EI continuation, especially when CPSE finds a child no longer eligible but EI continues to authorize services. <p>5. Provider Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Concern that some providers are not transparent in team meetings, recommending unnecessary continuation of services to maintain caseloads.Need for oversight or checks to prevent over-service and manage compliance. <p>Consensus: Gather documentation/examples from counties with past pilots or audits to strengthen advocacy with NYSDOH.</p>
Open Discussion	<p>Members reiterated the need to elevate clarity, transparency, and efficiency in EI.</p> <p>Key follow-ups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Compile and share information on the Free Care Act and SPA.Draft committee questions for BEI on ABA services (LBAs, RBTs, methodology, capacity).Collect county write-ups on primary provider/transdisciplinary model attempts.Brainstorm advocacy priorities for the 2025–2026 state budget cycle.
Closing	<p>The next Family Health Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14th, 2025 at 11:00am.</p>



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