

Safe Babies Court Team™ Approach

Designing an Implementation Plan for Washington State

In 2018, **children under the age of three made up 42% (1,829)** of child abuse and neglect cases in Washington State. Early childhood experiences shape children's brain development and have life-long impacts on their social, emotional and physical well-being. Timely and appropriate interventions help maltreated babies and families heal.

The Safe Babies Court Team™ (SBCT) approach is a **community engagement and systems-change initiative** focused on reducing trauma and improving how courts, child welfare and child-serving organizations work together to support young children in, or at-risk of entering, the child welfare system. **Pierce County** has led the way in Washington with the [Best for Babies Program](#), and now we have the opportunity to bring the SBCT approach to communities across Washington State.

We have a **HIGH IMPACT OPPORTUNITY** to change the landscape of our child welfare system and

- **REDUCE** the number of babies, toddlers and families entering the dependency court
- **IMPROVE** the well-being and cognitive development of babies and toddlers
- **PREVENT** trauma and family separation in a safe, equitable and effective manner

Core Components of the SBCT approach include:

- Judicial and Child Welfare Leadership
- Dedicated staff driving the team approach at the family and community level
- Pre-/Post-Removal Conferences and monthly Family Team Meetings
- Frequent family time, parent empowerment, and access to treatment that supports parent-child relationships
- Technical assistance, training and evaluation enable teams to assess effectiveness and improve outcomes

For more information on the Core Components, visit: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/services/the-safe-babies-court-team-approach>

Evidence of SBCT Effectiveness

	<u>SBCT</u>	<u>National</u>
Reduction in recurrence of maltreatment	0.7%	9.1%
More babies reunified with parents or placed with relatives	87.8%	66%

Children **of all races and ethnicities were served equally well** with regard to both placement **stability** and **length of stay** in foster care.

For more information, visit: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2181-safe-babies-court-team-trauma-informed-care-that-s-changing-lives>

ZERO TO THREE and CCYJ invite you to help design the Washington State Safe Babies Plan

Key stakeholders are invited to join the Safe Babies Design Team on **April 29, 2020** to initiate work that will:

- Create a blueprint for state-wide implementation and sustainability
- Identify state, regional and local needs - including barriers, strengths, and existing resources
- Develop a strategy for the upcoming 2021 legislative session
- Create a robust funding plan

For more information, please contact:

Michelle Williams, Program Coordinator
mwilliams@ccyj.org

