



INDIANA EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Recommendation to Adopt a Statewide Definition of Child Health

May 8th 2015

MEMBERS

Kevin Bain

Melanie Brizzi

Charlie Geier

Tammy Veselsky

Alonzo Weems

ADVISORY MEMBERS

John Burnett

Connie Sherman

Background / Process:

At the January 23rd kick-off meeting, the workgroup identified the importance of health in young children as a critical issue to address in 2015. The members determined that the first step was to develop a comprehensive definition of health. Members were assigned to research and collect information on the definition of child health adopted by 5 other states and 9 national organizations. After a thorough discussion of the research, a consensus was reached to adopt the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of child health, which many other states and organizations have already adopted and use.

Recommendation:

The Child Development and Well-Being workgroup recommends adopting the World Health Organization definition of child health for Indiana:

*“Child health is a state of **physical, mental, intellectual, social and emotional well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Healthy children live in **families, environments, and communities** that provide them with the opportunity to reach their fullest developmental potential.”*

Rationale:

The workgroup unanimously agrees with all components of this definition and has decided that adopting an internationally recognized and respected definition of child health will help support and convey Indiana’s level of commitment to see that all Hoosier children have the opportunity to live successful lives.

The workgroup has also drafted a white paper to support the importance of health in young children.

Full ELAC Committee Decision:

Recommendation was approved by a unanimous vote.