

# Services Improvement Plan For Children Ages 0-4

Initial Progress Report  
Children's Mental Health Commission  
September 6, 2017

# Background

- Children in the age range 0-4 years are showing early signs/symptoms of behavioral health challenges
  - *Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS)* periodically encounters children who have experienced early trauma and toxic levels of stress resulting in behaviors indicative of the need for early screening and intervention services.
  - *Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)* provides technical assistance to early care and education providers throughout the state when they encounter significant/persistent behavioral challenges in very young children to help them maintain order and safety in the early childhood classroom.
  - *Georgia Child Welfare Reform Council* identified this issue and a lack of services as a source of concerns.

# Georgia's Response

- Governor Deal proposed a total of \$8 million (\$2 million state/\$6 million Medicaid)
- Georgia General Assembly approved Governor's proposal as a part of the FY 2018 budget

# Proposed General Programmatic Approach

- Collaborating Agencies: Department of Community Health (DCH), Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Department of Public Health (DPH), Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), and Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
- Behavioral problems in very young children will be dealt with as developmental concerns with an explicit focus on evidence-based and trauma informed assessment and services
- DCH will enter into a contract that will effect an interagency transfer of the allocated funds to DPH to augment *Babies Can't Wait* for specified populations
- All collaborating agencies will work together and enter into an interagency memorandum of understanding concerning permissible use(s) of the allocated funds
- Funds will be used to serve Medicaid eligible populations, with priority given to children in DFCS custody and those encountered by DECAL who are in need of services

# Proposed Broad Program Architecture

- Use to create a true comprehensive screening, assessment, linkage system
- In each segment of the system identify and select cutting edge tools most appropriate to Georgia's desired system
- Should have an articulated connection to existing services, including EPSDT, Children First, Babies Can't Wait, and MIECHV programs
- Possible Models include: Project Launch and Help Me Grow
- Creation of the system should also include consideration of need for creation of designated Medicaid service category and need for changes to state Medicaid plan

# Project LAUNCH

## *(Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health)*

**Mission Statement:** Georgia's children, birth to age 8, will have increased access to screening, assessment and referrals to appropriate services to meet their social and emotional needs.

**Vision Statement:** To inspire, promote, and sustain positive outcomes and holistic wellness across every developmental domain for all Georgia's children.

### **Project Values**

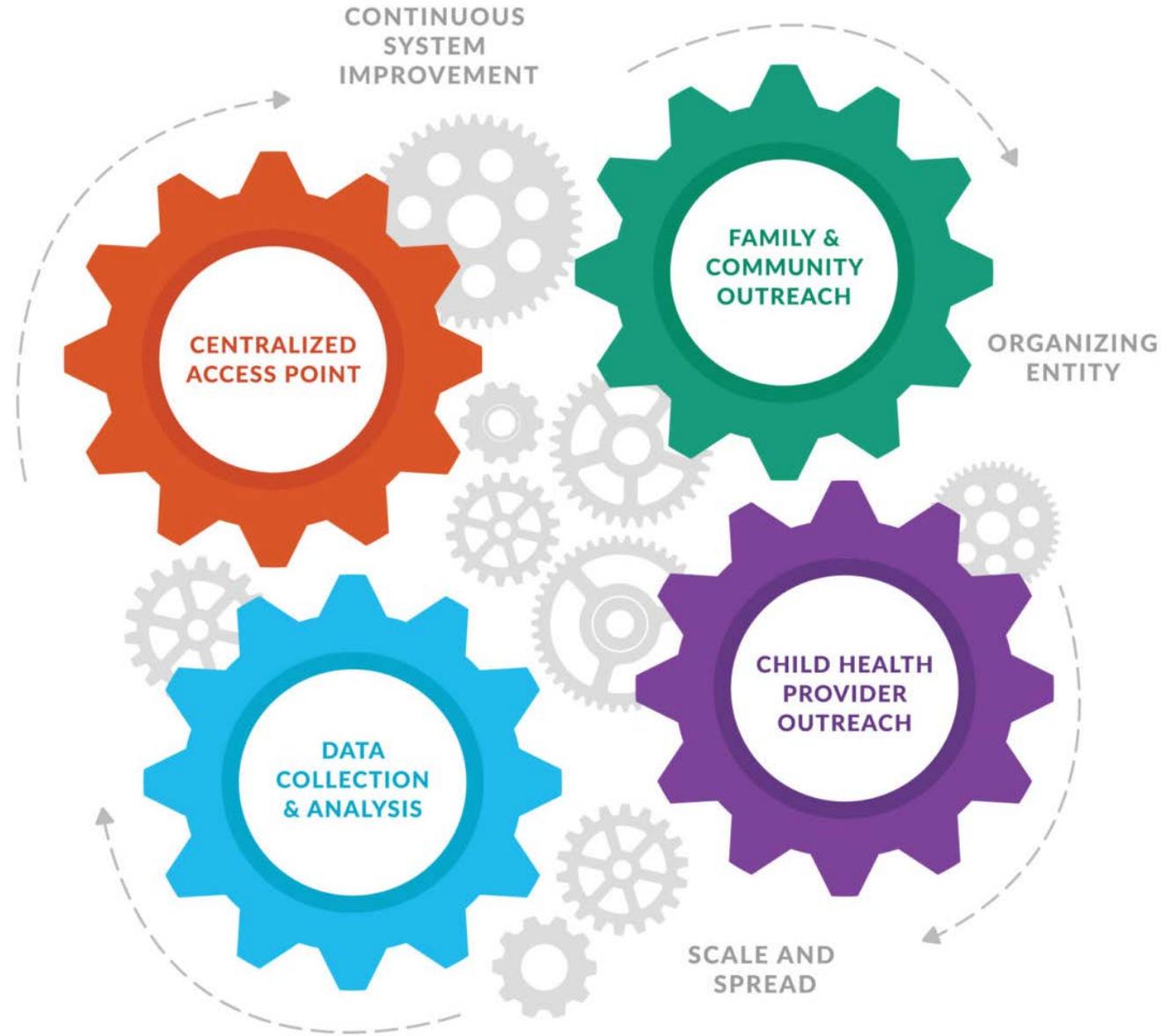
- *Holistic Perspective*
- *Public Health Approach*
- *Collaboration Culturally Competent*

### **Five Prevention and Promotion Strategies**

- Screening and assessment in a range of child-serving settings
- Integration of behavioral health into primary care settings
- Mental health consultation in early care and education
- Family strengthening and parent skills training
- Enhanced home visiting through increased focus on social and emotional well-being

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SYSTEM MODEL



# Initial Workgroup Members

- DCH: Lisa Walker, Deputy Commissioner
- DPH: Dr. Patrick O'Neal, Commissioner or designee
- DBHDD: Judy Fitzgerald, Commissioner or designee
- DECAL: Amy Jacobs, Commissioner or designee
- DFCS: Bobby Cagle, Director or designee

QUESTIONS?