

FY24 Budget Hearing: Testimony – Nicole Noel, Team Leader of Franklin/Grand Isle Early Intervention
(Parent Child Center of Northwestern Counseling & Support Services - St. Albans, Vermont)

My name is Nicole Noel and I am the Team Leader of the F/GI Early Intervention team at the Parent Child Center of Northwestern Counseling & Support Services. I am here today in support of increasing state funding for Parent Child Centers providing essential state services.

First, I would like to thank the legislature for their ongoing support of the PCC Network – As a parent of 2 young adults, having raised them in a state that recognizes the importance and true value of a network of family resource centers that support positive childhood experiences; I truly feel lucky. Early experiences are an important public health issue that the PCCs are on the front lines addressing. My team of Developmental Educators are completely dedicated to their work with children and families to make our community better.

To continue to provide prevention-based supports and services and build healthy communities in our state, please support an increase in base funding for the PCC Integrated Grant of \$5.2 million, for a total of \$10 million for the Integrated Grant. Underfunding has made providing all of the needed services to families a constant challenge.

It is critically important for Vermont families and communities that the services provided by PCCs are not only fully funded but of high quality and consistent across the state. An increase in funding will support the overall global health of the network by allowing for adequate funding of our prevention hub. An increase to our base funding will ensure that our state maintains a rich and robust network of family resource centers.

Investing in PCC's as critical primary prevention and upstream supports for families means that families will have the opportunity to access services and thus build on family strengths & enhance protective factors, which will stabilize children and families and reduce ACEs and the high costs associated with them.

The system exists to support families, and it is a robust one. We need to invest in the current system – we need to invest in the high-quality prevention work of PCCs. For Vermont families, PCCs are the answer.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Nicole Noel, M.Ed.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Noel, M.Ed." The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name and contact information.