



# Department of Public Health and Human Services

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**Steve Bullock, Governor**

**Sheila Hogan, Director**

April 20, 2017

Sylvia Danforth  
DEAP  
2200 Box Elder  
Miles City, MT 59301

Re: Letter of Determination  
DEAP Annual Performance Report for Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)

Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program used two specific implementation drivers to review the overall quality of DEAP - Part C Early Intervention program for Federal Year 2015 in addition to DEAP's self-assessment. The monitoring mechanisms capture a broad representation of compliance and results indicators.

The data gathered distinguishes practices, policies, and procedures that are well-executed and reveal quality practices and corresponding results. Additionally, particular issues identified require improvement approaches and strategies to meet compliance indicators and/or results indicators. The improvement proposals are generated by DEAP staff to address monitoring findings and monitored by the program's Quality Improvement Specialist, Kathleen Kaiser, and the Part C Coordinator, Wendy Studt. The expected outcome is increased compliance and quality measured in terms of results as well as identification of needed technical assistance to achieve improved results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

(1) Montana's Comprehensive Monitoring Tool reviews a randomized statistically valid sample (based upon FY 2015 Child Count Data) for the following components:

- Program Management
- Multidisciplinary Teams
- Qualified Personnel
- Evaluation and Assessment
- IFSP development
- IFSP implementation
- Outcomes quality and implementation
- Family Interview

(2) Montana's data management system, the Early Intervention (EI) Module, manages the full data lifecycle needs of Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program. The data identified during the comprehensive monitoring process is conditional upon the validity and reliability of the data as entered by DEAP staff. The database is an organized collection of:

- IFSP records;
- Child Outcomes records;
- Transition records;
- Exit records
- Child Outcomes Summary data;
- Child Counts;
- Exiting Reports;
- Child Outcomes Analysis;
- IFSP status;
- Notification reports of potentially eligible children;
- Transition conferences reports;
- Part B service referrals;
- IFSP services;
- Children turning age 3 transition reports; and
- Children turning age 8 transition reports.

**DEAP's Exemplary Practices:**

- DEAP's Part C Director performs quarterly reviews of Child Outcomes Summary data from the State's data management system to ensure both entry and exit Child Outcomes Summary measurements are accomplished.
- DEAP's system for obtaining Family Survey data is successful. DEAP's Family Survey return rate for FY 2015 was 77%.
- DEAP used Family Survey results to enhance program planning:
  - Comments and ratings summaries specific to each FSS are returned to the FSS to use for improvement of services, if needed; and
  - The summary of all programs is shared with staff, administration, and the Board.
- 100% of families interviewed indicated they understood the IFSP and had input in its development. Every family (17) contacted identified being an integral part of the IFSP planning process and able to direct the types of services their child needed. Families interviewed were complimentary describing the training and support the FSS provided to the family.

- DEAP met the IFSP implementation criterion and, in most cases, families received more service than what was indicated in the IFSP.
- DEAP provides all families with the link to “Let’s Chat About Early Intervention” using post cards sent out to families and added this information to the DEAP service agreement that is completed before any services are provided.
- 100% of DEAP staff members have completed the level of certification required for their length of employment.

**DEAP Improvement Plans and timelines:**

- DEAP staff was trained on IFSP development focusing upon writing quality outcomes. Training was provided on 4/14/16 by Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator, with additional training provided by Sherry Taylor on 8/8/16 and 9/12/16 (accepted 11/29/16). The training agendas and participant lists will be provided to Kathleen Kaiser, Quality Improvement Specialist, and Wendy Studt, MT Part C Coordinator. This monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).
- DEAP staff continues to monitor the timeliness of initial, six month reviews, and annual reviews (accepted 11/29/16). DEAP’s Intake Director will perform quarterly reviews of the State’s data management system to provide notification to FSSs of upcoming or missed deadlines. The supervisor will monitor staff to ensure they have a procedure for keeping track of deadlines. **Note:** The State’s data management system also issues upcoming timeline reminders to both the Family Support Specialist and the agency’s identified overseer of the State’s data management system. This monitoring data will be reviewed during the next cycle of comprehensive monitoring for FY 2016 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

**The Office of Special Education Programs Evaluation Team(s) reviewed Montana’s Annual Performance Report for FY 2014 (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015) and identified the following systems for targeted State-wide Technical Assistance in FY 2016 and 2017:**

- **Child Count:** The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will provide targeted assistance to improve Montana’s state-wide efforts to serve infants (birth to one year of age) and toddlers (one year of age to 3 years of age) thus improving Montana’s Section 618 Child Count. Additionally, referral sources (Child Protective Services and hospitals, clinics, and medical personnel focusing upon low birth weight babies) and their impact upon Child Count will be analyzed.
  - DEAP Point in Time, Birth to 1 year of age: 10 infants
  - DEAP Point in Time, Birth to 3 years of age: 52 infants and toddlers

- **Outcome Data:** OSEP will provide targeted assistance to improve the percentage of children exiting Part C that are included in outcome data.
  - The percentage of children exiting DEAP who are included in DEAP's outcome data: 28%.
- **Performance Indicators:** OSEP will provide targeted assistance to improve performance outcomes for infants and toddlers in the three global outcomes. DEAP's outcomes/results data:
  - **SiMR - Outcome A, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 83% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
  - **Outcome A, Summary Statement 2:** 64% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
  - **Outcome B, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 83% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
  - **Outcome B, Summary Statement 2:** 40% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
  - **Outcome C, Summary Statement 1:** Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 71% substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.
  - **Outcome C, Summary Statement 2:** 60% of the children were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

DEAP's contract with the Montana Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Program is essential to the delivery of Part C of IDEA services in Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud, Treasure, and Wibaux counties. Thank you for your commitment to meeting the requirements of Part C of IDEA and increasing the quality of early intervention in Montana.

Sincerely,

Wendy Studt, MT Milestones/Part C Early Intervention Coordinator  
Developmental Disabilities Program

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