

Early Childhood Services Bureau Updates – 2017

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HAPPY SPRING!

Happy Spring and welcome to the Spring Edition of the ECSB update and news. April is an exciting time for early childhood professionals working directly with children! Sunshine and outdoor play are in full swing – most days! It's also a special time of celebration for the Week of the Young Child, which will be happening April 24-28. We have referenced some resources available in this newsletter. Enjoy this special time of the year!

ECSB QUICK FACTS – DID YOU KNOW?

BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Best Beginnings child care scholarships support low-income families whose child receives care from a licensed child care center, registered group or family child care home, or legally certified child care provider.

In 2016, over 5,600 families received the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

BEST BEGINNINGS STARS TO QUALITY (STARS)

The Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Program is a voluntary quality rating improvement system that aligns quality indicators with support and incentives for early childhood programs and early childhood professionals. STARS programs are continuously improving their ability to provide a healthy, safe, and enriching environment for children. Programs have voluntarily enrolled in STARS to Quality to support Montana's children and families. All licensed programs are eligible to apply.

Currently, the total capacity for children served in STARS programs is just under 8000 children, representing 39% of the total capacity of licensed programs in Montana.

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

The CACFP is a federally funded program of the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). CACFP provides aid through grants and other means to support a nutritious non-profit food service for non-residential child and adult care programs.

In 2016, over 7.4 million meals were reimbursed in 683 facilities.

HEALTHY MT TEEN PARENT PROGRAM

The Healthy Montana Teen Parent Program (HMTTP) enables community service providers throughout the state to provide an efficient network of support services to pregnant and parenting teens, ages 14-24, and their families through funding, training, and technical support.

During the 2015-2016 grant year, 292 pregnant and parenting adolescents and 79 of their children received services through the nine sub-awardees who provide parenting and life skills education, resources, and support.

MONTANA HEAD START COLLABORATION OFFICE

The Head Start Collaboration Office facilitates collaboration among Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies) and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low income children from birth to school entry, and their families.

There are 13 Early Head Start, 4 Early Head Start child care Partnership Programs and 20 Head Start Programs in Montana.

MONTANA PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT (MPDG)

The Preschool Development Grant supports Montana to build or enhance preschool programs for the delivery of high-quality preschool services to children, and expand access to high-quality preschool programs in targeted communities. The MPDG is jointly implemented by the Governor's Office, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS). More information about the MPDG can be found on the [U.S. Department of Education Website](#).

Year 1 Outcomes:

Federally Eligible Four Year Old Children Served 462 Children	Preschool Aged Children Directly Impacted 211 Children	Preschool Aged Children Indirectly Impacted 1000+ Children
Four year old child whose income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.	Three to five year old child enrolled in MPDG classrooms that did not meet age or income requirements for federal reporting.	Three to five year old child enrolled in a school district or Head Start program receiving MPDG funding but their classroom was not identified as an MPDG classroom.

MONTANA PROJECT LAUNCH (LINKING ACTIONS FOR UNMET NEEDS IN CHILDREN'S HEALTH)

Montana Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) promotes the wellness of young children ages birth to 8 by addressing the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of their development. The goal is to engage Montana's early childhood partners to improve systems and access to mental health services for young children and families in our rural state while piloting evidence-based practices in Gallatin and Park Counties.

All home visitors are being cross-trained on mental health topics: suicidal ideation, mental health first aid, perinatal/postnatal mood disorders and early childhood mental health and medication, social emotional development and attachment.

EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START STARS STANDARDS

The Early Childhood Services Bureau is excited to announce that, effective August 2017, Early Head Start and Head Start programs (per Head Start Program Performance Standards) that are not currently participating will begin participating in Montana's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) called STARS to Quality. A crosswalk work group consisting of various partners and stakeholders convened to align and crosswalk Head Start and STARS standards which resulted in the Early Head Start/Head Start STARS to Quality Standards.

Resources can be found on the Early Childhood Services Bureau Website:

- ☆ [Head Start / Early Head Start Standards](#)
- ☆ [Head Start / Early Head Start Standards Timeline](#)
- ☆ [Head Start / Early Head Start Standards Frequently Asked Questions](#)

NEW LOOK FOR THE STARS WEBSITE

The STARS team is excited to share with you that the STARS to Quality website has an updated and revised look. This updated website provides a more streamlined way to access information. The updates are designed to appeal to both families and programs, and we are excited to see more families choose programs that are going above and beyond foundational licensing requirements.

As with any new project, please bear with us as we continuously work to improve this website to be sure it meets the needs of all consumers who wish or need to access it. Please contact us with any questions you may have.

STAFF UPDATES

ECSB BUDGET ANALYST ☆ JASON HARLOW

Jason earned an accounting degree from The University of Montana in Missoula. Before coming to ECSB, Jason had spent the previous 8 years in a corporate business management department. Jason has two daughters, Rheagan (8) and Avery (4), and is coming up on 10 years of marriage to his wife, Katie. As a family, they enjoy staying active and consuming all the outdoor fun there is to be had in Western Montana.

Welcome, Jason!

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

The following information comes from the [NAEYC website](#):

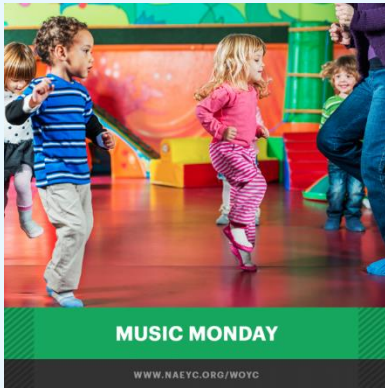
Celebrate NAEYC's Week of the Young Child™ April 24-28, 2017

The Week of the Young Child™ is an annual celebration hosted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers and families.

Want more on quality early learning? [Sign up](#) to get the latest WOYC news from NAEYC.

Music Monday! April 24

Sing, dance, celebrate, and learn



Through music, children develop math, language, and literacy skills - All while having fun and being active! This year's song is "[One Love,](#)" as performed by [Aaron Nigel Smith and the One World Chorus](#). You can record the song with the [official lyrics](#), or make up your own unique version and share it on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag **#woyc17**.

TRY THIS: Find the beat to connect music, movement, and math. Practice clapping, drumming, or stomping to the beat of the music while counting.

[Music resources for families and teachers](#)

[NAEYC For Families](#) also has a great collection of family-friendly songs and musicians to inspire more ways to learn with music!

Tasty Tuesday April 25

Healthy eating and fitness at home and school

This fun, food-themed day is about more than just cheese and crackers. Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science, and more. With the rise in childhood obesity, you can encourage healthy nutrition and fitness habits at home and in the classroom by creating your own healthy snacks and then sharing the recipes and photos of your creations on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag **#woyc17**.

TRY THIS: Measure your ingredients while making your snacks! Ask children if they'd like the same or different amounts of each ingredient.

For more fun ideas on how to incorporate cooking into your classroom activities, [check out how one NAEYC-accredited center prepared for the day!](#)

[Cooking and nutrition resources for families and teachers](#)

Download the [Week of the Young Child Taco Cookbook!](#)



Work Together Wednesday April 26
Work together, build together, learn together



When children build together they explore math and science concepts and develop their social and early literacy skills. Children can use any building material—from a fort of branches on the playground to a block city in the classroom, or a hideaway made from couch pillows at home. Build and share pictures of children's creations on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or Twitter using the #woyc17 hashtag.

Work Together Wednesday 2016 was sponsored by our friends at Walden University.

TRY THIS: Practice organizing blocks by size! Try building a block tower with large blocks on the bottom and little blocks on top!

['Building Together' resources for families and teachers](#)

Artsy Thursday April 27
Think, problem solve, create

Children develop creativity, social skills and fine motor skills with open-ended art projects where they can make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands. On Artsy Thursday celebrate the joy and learning children experience when engaged in creative art making. Use any materials - from crayons to paint, clay to crafts! Create and share a photos of your children's creations on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or Twitter using the #woyc17 hashtag.

TRY THIS: Bring art outdoors! Offer dark and light paper, chalk and pastels, and suggest children create their own versions of the day and night sky!

[Open-ended art resources for families and teachers](#)



Family Friday April 28
Sharing family stories



Engaging and celebrating families is at the heart of supporting our youngest learners. NAEYC applauds family members' role as young children's first and most important teachers. Share pictures and stories about your family on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag #woyc17 as we celebrate the unique role families play in their children's learning and development.

TRY THIS: Invite parents for a Family Friday breakfast, where children can prepare and share breakfast treats with their families!

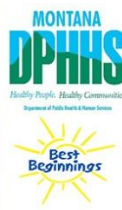
[Resources for engaging and celebrating families](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

GREAT BEGINNINGS GREAT FAMILIES CONFERENCE – AUGUST 16-17, 2017

GREAT BEGINNINGS GREAT FAMILIES

Radisson Colonial Hotel, Helena



AUGUST 16-17, 2017

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Choice of breakout sessions
- National and local keynote speakers and presenters
- Networking with professionals serving young children and families in Montana

OFFERING

- Early Childhood Project Approved Training Hours
- Montana Office of Public Instruction Renewal Units
- Nursing Contact Hours
- Social Work and Professional Counselor Continuing Education Hours

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Early Childhood Professionals
- Home Visitors
- Nurses working with young children and families
- Social Workers

ECSB STAFF LIST

[Patty Butler](#), ECSB Bureau Chief

[Jason Harlow](#), Budget Analyst

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Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Staff

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[Leann Worden](#), Best Beginnings Program Officer

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Vacant, Program Specialist

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Vacant, Montana Project LAUNCH Wellness Partner

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