

MONTANA HEAD START NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2013-2014 UPDATE

Head Start State Collaboration Office



Montana Head Start Needs Assessment

2013-2014 Update

Report prepared by the Montana Head Start State Collaboration Office

Early Childhood Services Bureau

Human and Community Services Division

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services



**Montana Head Start
State Collaboration**



Introduction

The Head Start Act (as amended December 12, 2007) requires the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs) to conduct an annual needs assessment of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. The purpose of the 2013-2014 Head Start Collaboration Needs Assessment is to evaluate perceptions held by Head Start and Early Head Start programs, as to inform strategic planning for the year. The Office of Head Start does not specify the methodology or instrument used to collect information. Head Start State Collaboration Office directors do have a common resource and guidance they can follow on the ECLKC website portal, but guidance is optional. In the past, the Montana Head Start State Collaboration Needs Assessment has evaluated a few specific priority areas, a snapshot of Head Start activities and needs across the state, as well as qualitative findings that build off of statewide Program Information Reports (PIR).

The goal is to simply assess how Head Start and Early Head Start programs collectively respond to the various priority areas, as listed by the Office of Head Start. The Montana Head Start State Collaboration Office continued this year with a series of questions that directly correlate with the priority areas, which are used by all HSSCO offices. There are also questions tailored to the Montana grantees, assessing perceived strengths and challenges.

The 2013-2014 Needs Assessment is comprehensive of three data sources:

1. Survey Analysis & Findings: The survey was conducted via Survey Monkey in 2014 and distributed to all Head Start and Early Head Start directors in the State of Montana.
2. Program Information Report (PIR) Statewide Data findings conducted by the Office of Head Start
3. Montana Best Beginnings Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Purpose

The intent of this report is to understand the landscape of Head Start and Early Head Start in Montana, identify key findings that support ongoing collaboration, or the development of new collaborations, as well as the development of recommendations, based on the three data sources for next year. The recommendations are what will drive the work of the Head Start State Collaboration in the upcoming year, and will inform state and local partners about Head Start and Early Head Start perceptions and needs across the state.

Head Start State Collaboration Office

The Montana Head Start State Collaboration Office:

Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCO) were created to facilitate collaboration among Head Start Agencies in each state. HSSCO's are awarded funds under Section 642B of the 2007 Head Start Act. This section contains provisions for the award of a collaboration grant to each State and to each national administrative office serving American Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs to facilitate collaboration among Head Start and early Head Start agencies and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income children from birth to school entry and their families.

The mission of the Montana Head Start State Collaboration Office is *“To impact the lives of low-income children and families by influencing state and local policy and the effective delivery of services, while linking Head Start Programs and communities through collaborative relationships.”*

The Montana Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) is housed in the Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) of the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). The HSSCO grant is managed by the Head Start State Collaboration Office Director. This position is linked within the systems unit of the Early Childhood Services Bureau, which consists of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) program, the Best Beginnings Advisory Council (BBAC), and the Pregnant and Parenting Teen program. The HSSCO is supervised by the Early Childhood Systems Collaboration Manager. The HSSCO director assists Head Start grantees in collaborating with state and local planning entities to coordinate services and improve outcomes in early childhood. The Office of Head Start priority areas guide activities and policy.

Purpose of the Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices

Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices (HSSNCOs) exist “to facilitate 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.”¹

HSSNCOs provide a structure and a process for the Office of Head Start (OHS) to work with state and local entities to leverage their common interests around young children and their families. Working together, they formulate, implement, and improve state and local policies and practices. To be effective, the HSSNCO director must hold a full-time position of sufficient

¹ Head Start Act Section 642B(a)(2)(A)

authority and access to ensure collaboration "is effective and involves a range of state agencies."²

Methods of Coordination

Methods by which HSSNCOs coordinate and lead efforts for diverse entities to work together include:

1. **Communication** - Convene stakeholder groups for information sharing and planning. Be a conduit of information between the Regional Office and the State and local early childhood system.
2. **Access** - Facilitate Head Start agencies' access to and utilization of appropriate entities so Head Start children and families can secure needed services and critical partnerships are formalized.
3. **Systems** - Support policy, planning, and implementation of cross agency State systems for early childhood, including the State Advisory Council, that include and serve the Head Start community.

Priority Areas

Head Start State Collaboration Offices are to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies and State and local entities as charged by the Office of Head Start and Regional Offices. There are three priorities that all Head Start State Collaboration Offices must focus on:

1. School Transitions
2. Professional Development
3. Child Care and Early Childhood Systems

Furthermore, there are regional office priorities that states must also be responsive to. These are the priorities for Region VIII.

1. Health Services
2. Services to Children Experiencing Homelessness
3. Services to Children with Disabilities
4. Child Welfare
5. Family and Community Partnerships

The survey conducted for the purposes of this needs assessment is based off of these priority areas, and the related recommendations. See Attachment A for the Office of Head Start priority area document.

² Head Start Act Section 642B(a)(3)(B)

Methodology

Purpose:

The Head Start State Collaboration Office utilized a survey to collect information from local Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. The purpose of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding of how Head Start and Early Head Start grantees experience collaboration with state and local agencies. Additionally, it was to understand where the Head Start community would like to see efforts focused in the upcoming year.

The same survey was used to collect data this year as last year in order to assess improvement in collaboration, as well as a shift in where collective and collaborative efforts are executed. In the coming year when planning begins for the 5-year grant application, a more in-depth, statistically significant survey will be conducted.

Data Collection:

The Head Start Needs Assessment Survey was disseminated in June of 2014. All Head Start Directors who attended the Director's Retreat were notified that they would be receiving the survey in the next week. The survey went out later this year due to the Director position being vacant until May and a new Director starting. The survey link was emailed to all Head Start and Early Head Start directors, one per grantee. The survey was self-administered, meaning the participant was responsible for completing the survey. A request was made for directors to fill the survey out in collaboration with grantee staff. Directors are referred to as grantees in this document.

The goal was to have all responses in by July 1st of 2014. Four reminder emails were sent out as follow-up to the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. Grantees who had not completed the survey were individually contacted on July 21st and July 25th with a request to complete the survey within seven days. In total, 18 responses out of 23 were submitted to the Head Start State Collaboration Office, via Survey Monkey. If grantees were both Head Start and Early Head Start, they submitted one response. Five responses were not obtained.

Survey Design:

The questionnaire was divided into the following areas: A) Instructions, B) Grantee information, C) Part 1: Collaboration, D) Part 2: Identifying Needs. The questionnaire in its entirety can be viewed in **Attachment B**.

Data relevant to findings was collected in two parts as to distinguish the purpose of each to the participating grantee.

Part 1: Collaboration

This section of the questionnaire was designed to assess the respondents' perception about how their Head Start and/or Early Head Start program partners with a variety of community and state support services. Respondents were asked to indicate how they rank the partnership with a variety of programs and partners in terms of High-level Collaboration, Moderate Collaboration, Limited Collaboration, or None/Not Applicable. The purpose of this question was to guide the work of the Head Start State Collaboration Office in how it can improve coordination and collaboration between agencies that Head Start grantees perceived as "limited collaboration", as well as to identify agencies with "high-level collaboration" as to identify strategies that can be replicated with other agencies and partners. Subsequent surveys will be able to identify change in level of collaboration.

Part 2: Identifying Needs

This section of the questionnaire asks respondents to prioritize which specific activities the Head Start and Early Head Start respondents would like to see improvement in, within the following grant year. This part was designed by listing out the Head Start State Collaboration Priority Areas, and their related activities (refer to Attachment A). A comment box was added at the end of each priority area. Priority areas include: School Transitions, Professional Development, Child Care and Early Childhood Systems, Health Services, Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness, Services to Children with Disabilities, Child Welfare, and Family and Community Partnerships.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide one strength of their program, as well as an identified gap or need they would like to see addressed.

Findings

A note on the analysis: Findings are based on responses to a non-scientific survey, developed from a collective tool available to all Head Start State Collaboration Offices. The results, though informative, are not to be considered representative of all Head Start and Early Head Start employees in Montana. The purpose is to simply inform the Head Start State Collaboration Office and other partners, for use in ongoing planning. The data and findings are useful for the purpose of this update. It is recommended that when planning begins for the 5-year grant application, a more in-depth, statistically significant survey be conducted.

Part One

Head Start and Early Head Start grantees were asked to rank local and state partnerships in terms of level of collaboration, and could select high-level collaboration, moderate collaboration, limited collaboration, and none/not applicable. This information is useful for the Head Start State Collaboration Office, as it provides a clear framework for which partnerships need to be enhanced, or connected.

Programs or agencies that Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees ranked 50% or higher in terms of high-level collaboration, include Early Intervention, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), School Districts, Mental Health Services for 3-5 year olds, Mental Health Counseling, Healthy Montana Kids, WIC, Local Health Department, Dental Home Providers and Community Partners. The CACFP program ranked the highest with 94.4% of respondents marking it as a high level collaboration.

The majority of programs or agencies fell in the “moderate collaboration” category. Head Start and Early Head Start respondents ranked collaboration with Head Start T/TA highest in the moderate collaboration category at 72.2%. Areas of “limited collaboration” include programs or agencies with a ranking of 50% or greater. There were none in this category this year. There was a category of “None/Not Applicable” meaning current collaborations either do not exist due to availability, and/or due to the perception that collaboration does not exist, even if the agency/program is active in the grantee’s community. Programs or agencies with a ranking of 50% or greater in this category include Striving Readers, Child Care, Infant Mental Health Services, Toddler Mental Health, and Military Family Liaisons. . Thirteen of the programs or agencies did not rank higher than 50% in any of the categories and are therefore not listed in the table below. Of additional note though is that Head Start T/TA, STARS to Quality and additional Home Visiting MIECHV have all moved up in the strength of the collaborations across the state as compared to last year’s needs assessment.

Also of note are the collaborations that are seen as limited or non-existent which include toddler and infant mental health, military family liaisons, Child care centers and Striving Readers. Striving Readers is at very limited sites so that is understandable. The other areas are definitely issues for further exploration and collaboration.

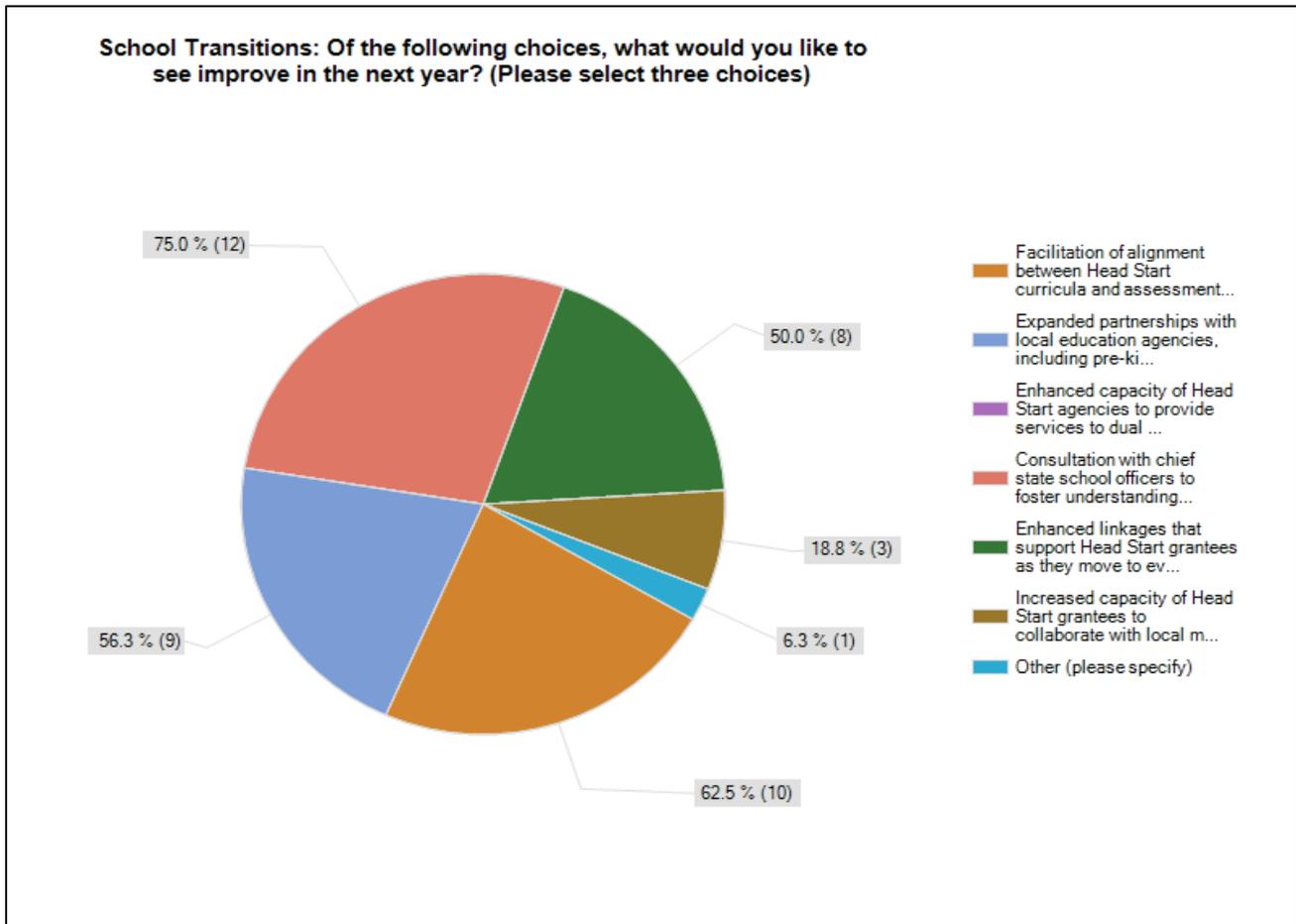
Highest rankings (greater than or equal to 50%) in terms of High-level collaboration, Moderate Collaboration, Limited Collaboration, and None/Not Applicable:

Perceived level of collaboration with local/state partner agencies and programs among Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees in Montana				
	High-Level Collaboration	Moderate Collaboration	Limited Collaboration	None/Not Applicable
CACFP (Child and Adult Food Program (94.4%))	X			
Local Health Department (72.2%)	X			
3-5 year old Mental Health Services (64.7%)	X			
Community Partners (61.1%)	X			
School Districts (61.1%)	X			
Early Intervention (61.1%)	X			
Dental Home Provider (55.6%)	X			
Mental Health Counseling Services (55.6%)	X			
WIC (55.6%)	X			
Healthy Montana Kids/SCHIP (50%)	X			
Head Start T/TA (72.2%)		X		
Homelessness (50%)		X		
Medical Home Providers (50%)		X		
Striving Readers (66.7%)				X
Child Care Centers(61.1)				X
Infant Mental Health Services (61.1%)				X
Military family Liaisons (58.8%)				X
Toddler Mental Health (55.6%)				X

Part Two

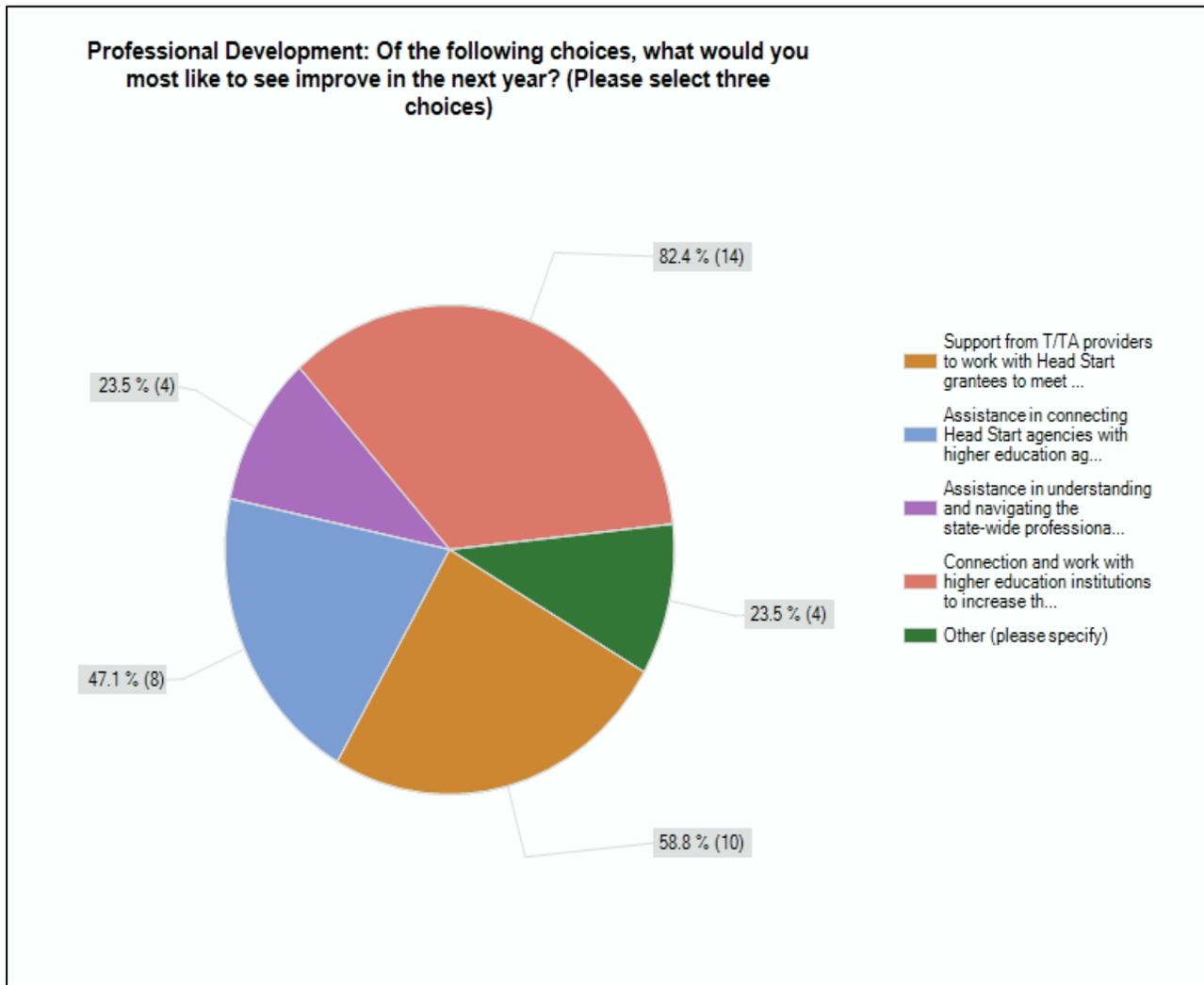
Head Start and Early Head Start grantees were asked to indicate which activity they would like to see improve in the upcoming year. Each of the Head Start Collaboration Priority areas, which include the regional priorities were listed, as well as the suggested activities. The purpose was to identify which activities were collectively ranked the highest in each priority area, as to direct the work of the Head Start State Collaboration Office, and state partners. The following is a description of the findings in each category:

School Transitions



The activity with the highest ranking at 75% for School Transitions: Consultation with chief state school officers to foster understanding of Head Start comprehensive services, align curricula and assessments, and promote partnerships between Head Start and local education agencies.

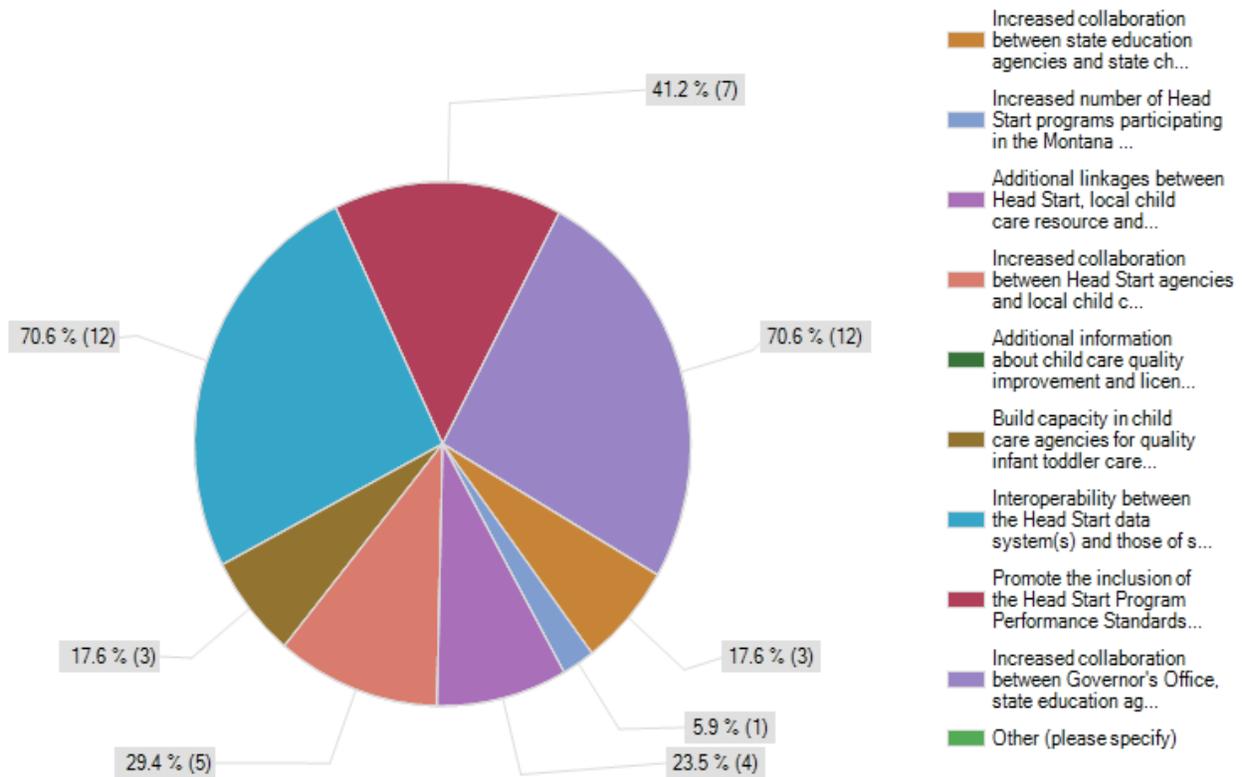
Professional Development



The activity with the highest ranking at 82.4% for Professional Development: Connection and work with higher education institutions to increase the number of Head Start teachers, assistant teachers and education managers who meet the Head Start required specifications.

Child Care and Early Childhood Systems

Child Care and Early Childhood Systems: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

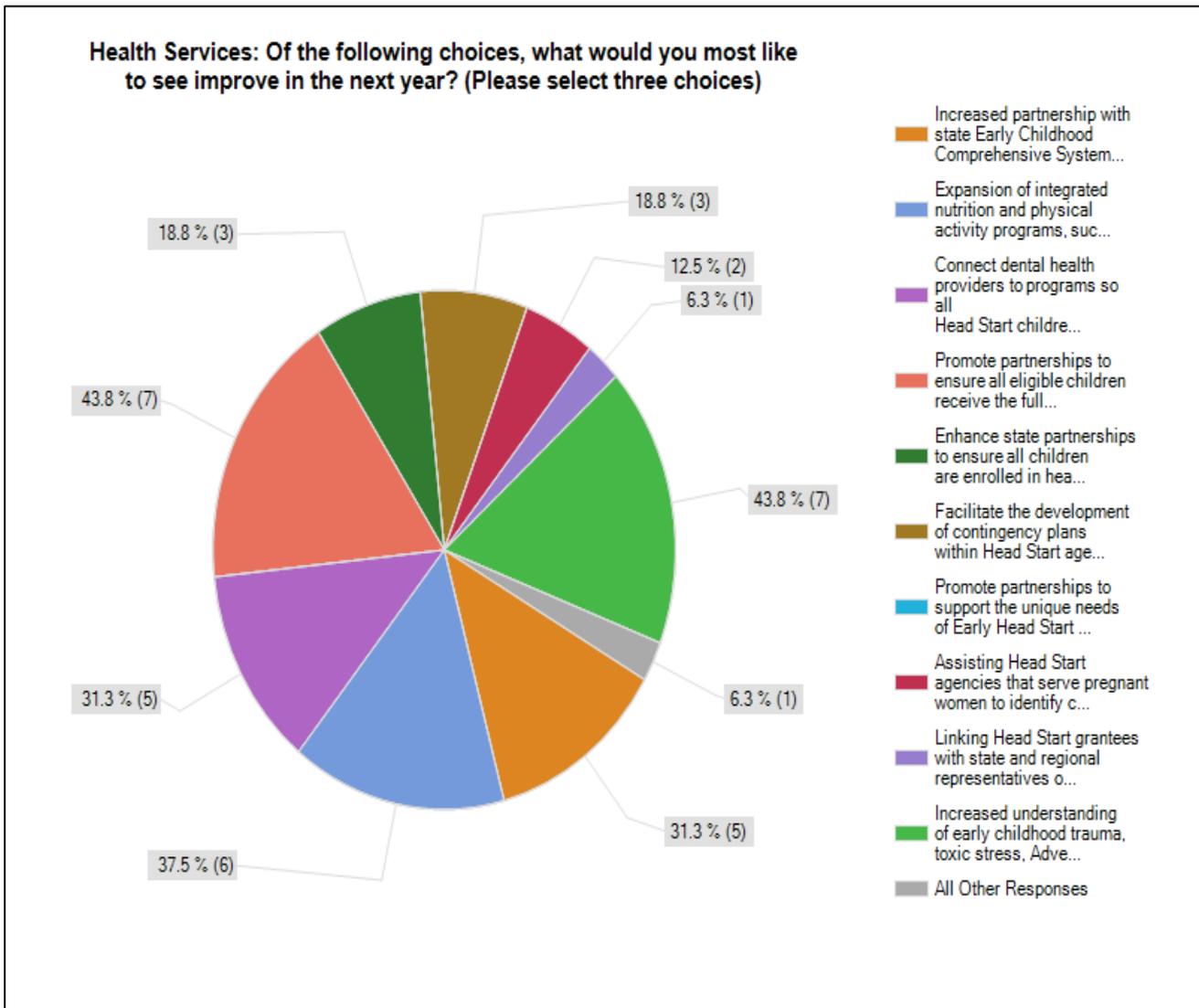


There were two activities that tied both ranking at 70.6% for Child Care and Early Childhood Systems:

Interoperability between the Head Start data system(s) and those of state preschool and k-12 systems that includes the assignment of unique State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) that remain with students throughout their pre-k-12 public education so that Head Start participants can be included in state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies, and tracking systems to demonstrate sustainable educational outcomes.

Increased collaboration between the Governor's office, state education agencies, and HS/EHS concerning proposal for Pre-K and partnerships between school districts and HS programs.

Health Services

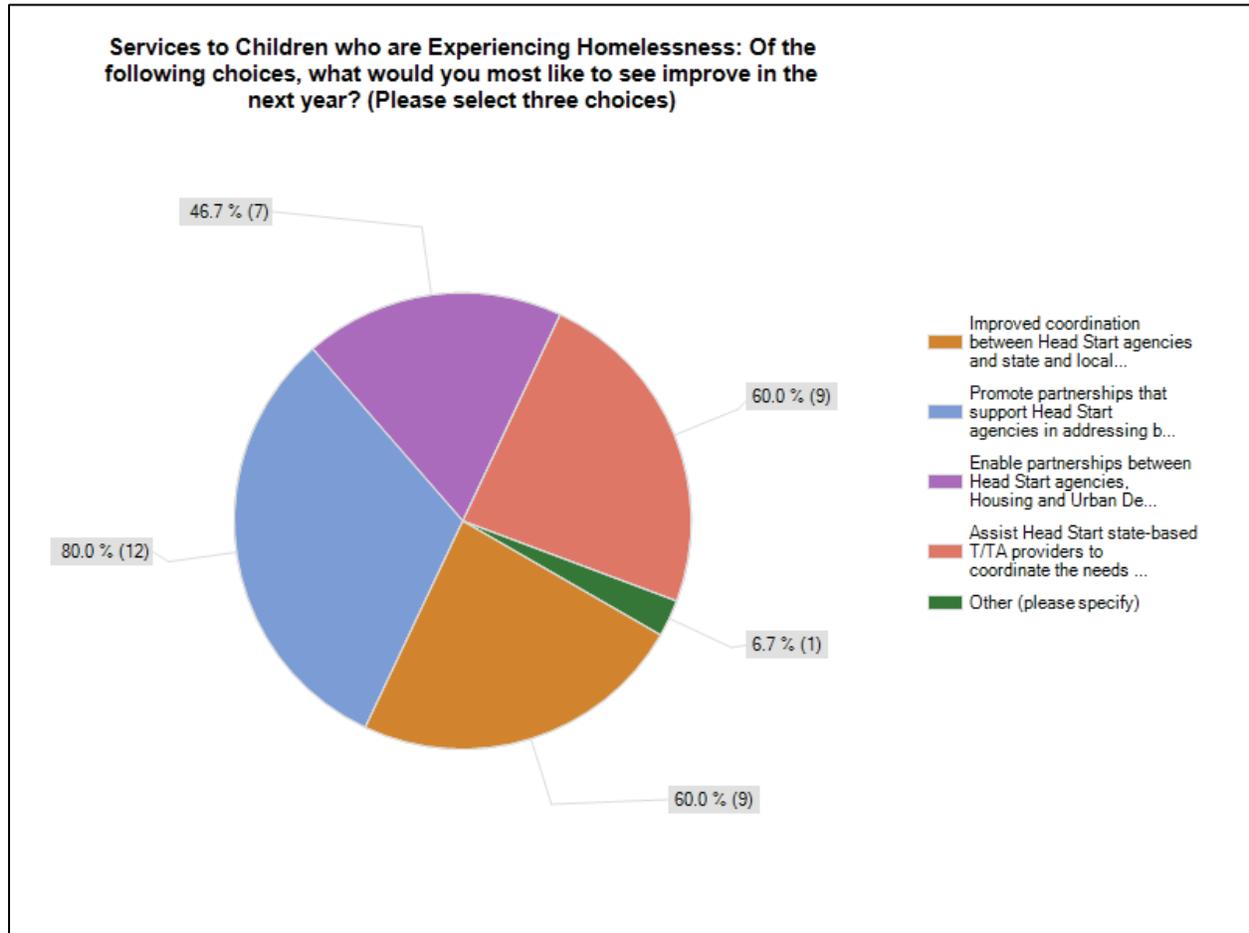


The two activities with the highest ranking at 43.8% for Health Services:

Increased understanding of early childhood trauma, toxic stress, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how Head Start programs can better educate staff and parents on this topic.

Promote partnerships to ensure all eligible children receive the full range of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), community clinics, and private providers, and that all necessary follow-up is completed for physical, mental, and oral health.

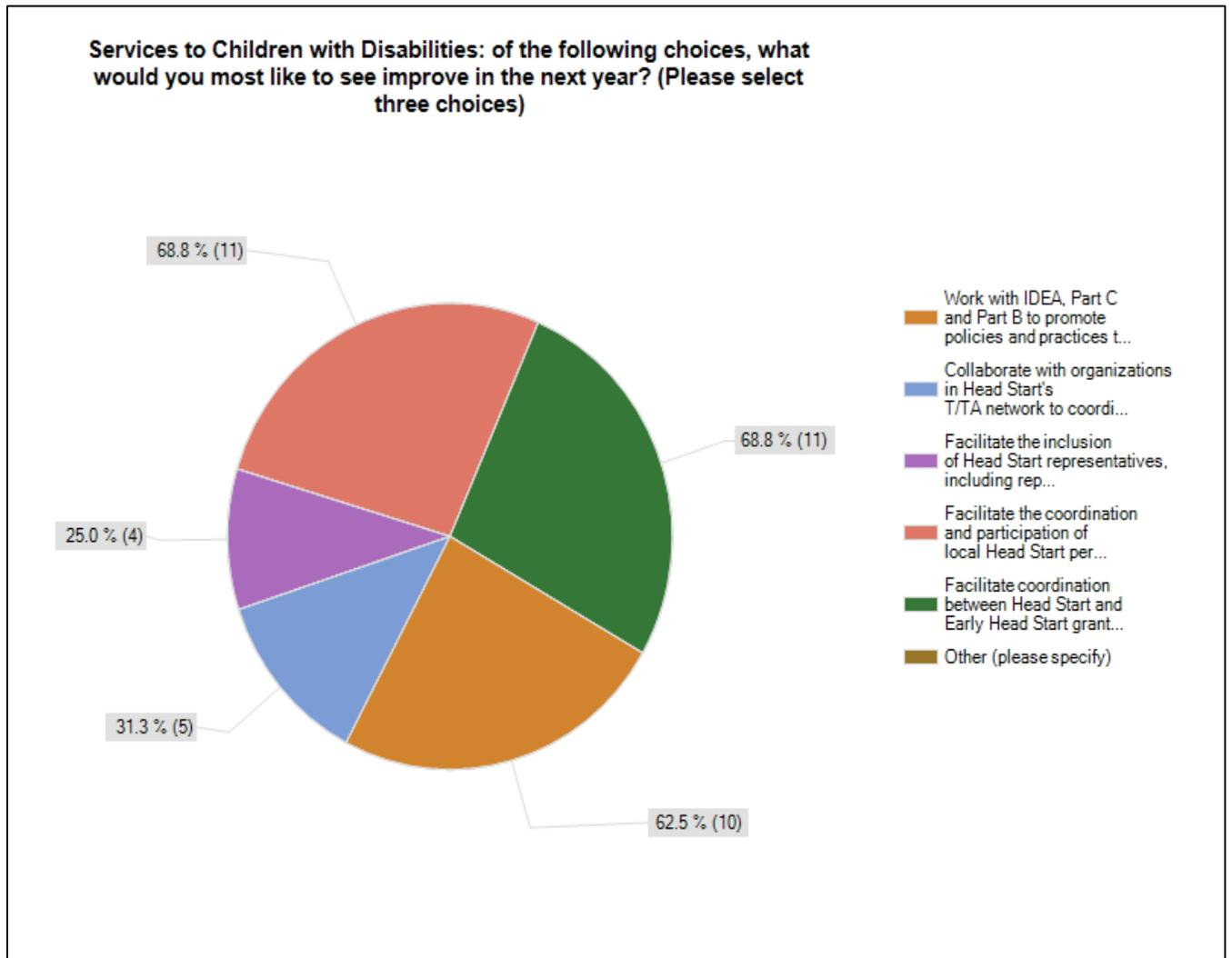
Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness



The activity with the highest ranking at 80% for Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness:

Promote partnerships that support Head Start agencies in addressing barriers to serving children and families experiencing homelessness.

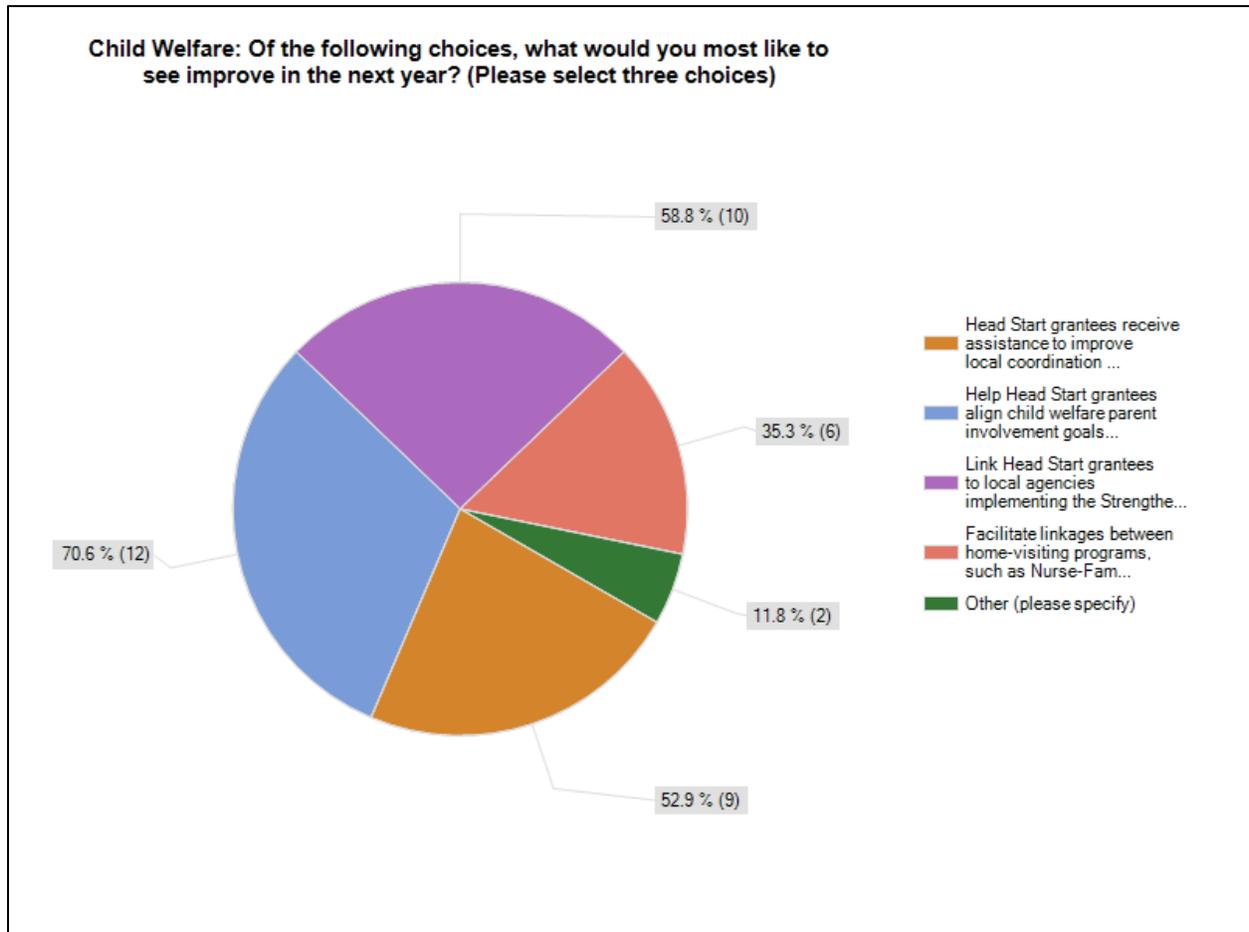
Services to Children with Disabilities



The activity with the highest ranking at 68.8% for Services to Children with Disabilities:

Facilitate coordination between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Part C/Early Identification for approaches that promote the timely referral, evaluation, and transition of children from Head Start into elementary school in accordance with federal, state and local requirements. Facilitate the coordination and participation of local Head Start personnel in the state's child identification efforts (Child Find) and other early identification activities.

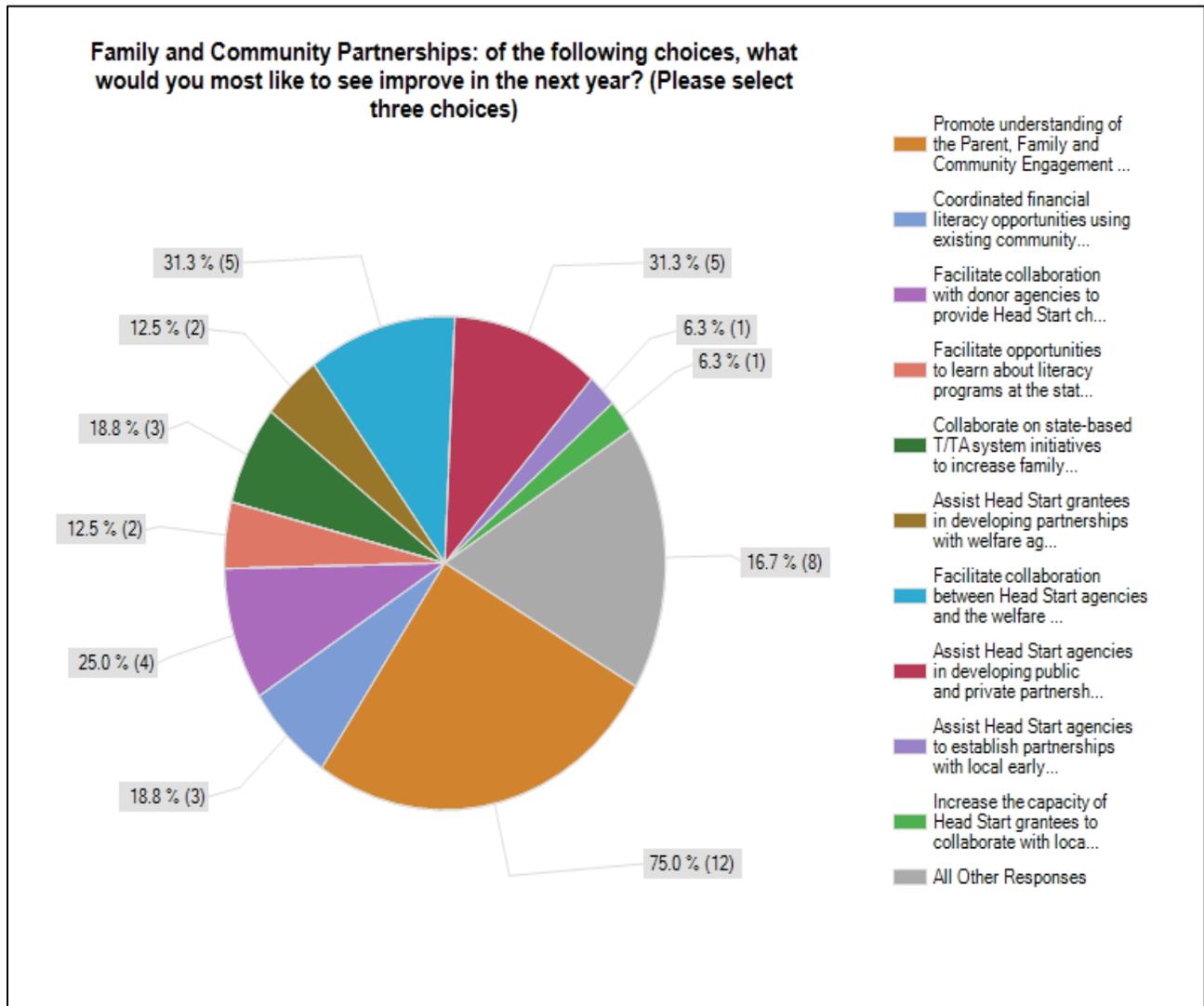
Child Welfare



The activity with the highest ranking at 70.6% for Child Welfare:

Help Head Start grantees align child welfare parent involvement goals with Head Start parent engagement goals, including self-sufficiency;

Family and Community Partnerships



The activity with the highest ranking at 75%% for Family and Community Partnerships:

Promote understanding of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework among Head Start grantees and other early child care partners.

Program Strengths:

Grantees who responded to Question 13: ***Please identify one strength of your program***

When coded, the most common themes were community support and partnerships, leadership, school district collaborations, data driven, as well as cultural and language retention. Program information has been de-identified to uphold integrity of confidentiality.

List of the responses:

1. We have very strong collaborations with LEA both part C and part B.
2. We are a small organization and can meet the parents where they are and work outside of the box in helping to meet families' needs.
3. Cultural language activities
4. We have a strong Language retention program for the Cree children we serve
5. Inclusion program with local school district -very strong
6. Community support.
7. Literacy, due to the fact we received the Montana Striving Reader's grant.
8. Curriculum, Assessments and the use of data
9. Extremely competent and engaged Board of Directors
10. We have strong early childhood mental health services and support
11. Community partnerships
12. Collaboration with other local agencies. Communication.
13. strong focus on using data to improve readiness
14. Maintain many partnerships that support Head Start children, families, and staff.
15. Literacy, we order "lots" of books for our children...
16. Leadership

Program Gaps or Needs Grantees would like to see addressed:

Grantees who responded to Question 14: ***Please identify one gap or need you would like to see addressed in the next year (if not indicated in Part 2)***

The most common themes were need for increased funding opportunities, professional development at all levels, coordination and partnership with LEAs and assurance that HS/EHS is at the table in state wide discussions of early childhood and advocacy support.

List of responses:

1. Guidance in meeting the mental health needs of the children
2. The State T & TA network isn't working for Head Start/Early Head Start directors. The issues we need assistance with - fiscal, facilities, grant management, etc., the T & TA network isn't authorized to handle.
3. Provide more funds to the State LEA's, so they can hire more staff and provide services more timely to the children/families they serve.
4. To help work with local Higher Education Programs to assist staff in getting their degrees

5. The need to bridge the gap between Head Start and universal preschool. Head Start needs to be at the table when designing the system.
6. Literacy in the classrooms.
7. A Child Development Associate process that is more streamlined statewide. There are several different avenues that can be accessed that are confusing or even regulating such as with STARs program. The CDA process is tedious and all over the board. A more cohesive process to obtain a CDA in an effective manner would be a benefit.
8. Increased operational funding; not limited to Literacy etc. Head Start is no longer the go to employer in ECE because our compensation is so low. OHS points to the State as does Washington Foundation.
9. Better collaboration for transitions/working with school districts
10. Transition practices. Diagnosis of disabilities in the EHS age range.
11. Like many other programs, we struggle with staff turnover.
12. Ensuring HS/EHS/and tribal participation in any and all task forces, councils, meetings, etc. where early childhood is an agenda item.
13. Get T/TA to provide us with more training!!!
14. Tribal funding resources

Additional thoughts or feedback for the Head Start State Collaboration Office:

Grantees were asked to please include any additional thoughts or feedback to help the Head Start State Collaboration Office best meet needs and build off of program strengths when developing a work plan. Those comments included the following:

1. To have a better relationship between Tribal Programs and State Programs.
2. Need stronger connections with Governor's office and EC Bureau
3. How to work more effectively with smaller LEAs in our service area; we have very good partnerships with our two large LEAs.

These comments mirror the comments from the previous section and will be incorporated into the work plan for the collaboration office.

Key Findings

The assessment analyzed needs and strengths within three areas 1) the perceived level of collaboration with local/state partner agencies and programs among Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees in Montana, 2) Improvement in specific priority areas by identifying activities of high interest. Assessed areas include School Transitions, Professional Development, Child Care and Early Childhood Systems, Health Services, Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness, services to Children with

Disabilities, Child Welfare, and Family and Community Partnerships, and 3) grantees self-assessment of their own program strengths, needs, and suggestions for the HSSCO.

Through analysis, common needs emerged across all areas of assessment:

- The need for increased collaboration between the Head Start Community and local/state partner agencies and programs.
- The need to develop strategies for increased collaboration between Head Start and LEAs as well as the state educational entity OPI.
- Programs feel like they have a high-collaboration with the CACFP program and School Districts.
- Mental Health for 3-5 year olds and mental health counseling services were perceived as high-collaborations, but infant and toddler mental health was perceived as low.
- The need for increased coordination with military family support.

Key findings in Part Two are identified as the activities that received the highest ranking in each priority area category.

School Transitions: Consultation with chief state school officers to foster understanding of Head Start comprehensive services, align curricula and assessments, and promote partnerships between Head Start and local education agencies.

Professional Development: Connection and work with higher education institutions to increase the number of Head Start teachers, assistant teachers and education managers who meet the Head Start required specifications.

Child Care and Early Childhood Systems: Interoperability between the Head Start data system(s) and those of state preschool and k-12 systems that includes the assignment of unique State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) that remain with students throughout their pre-k-12 public education so that Head Start participants can be included in state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies, and tracking systems to demonstrate sustainable educational outcomes.

Increased collaboration between the Governor's office, state education agencies, and HS/EHS concerning proposal for Pre-K and partnerships between school districts and HS programs.

Health Services: Increased understanding of early childhood trauma, toxic stress, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how Head Start programs can better educate staff and parents on this topic.

And Promote partnerships to ensure all eligible children receive the full range of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), community clinics, and private providers, and that all necessary follow-up is completed for physical, mental, and oral health.

Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness: Promote partnerships that support Head Start agencies in addressing barriers to serving children and families experiencing homelessness.

Services to Children with Disabilities: Facilitate coordination between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Part C/Early Identification for approaches that promote the timely referral, evaluation, and transition of children from Head Start into elementary school in accordance with federal, state and local

Child Welfare: Help Head Start grantees align child welfare parent involvement goals with Head Start parent engagement goals, including self-sufficiency.

Family and Community Partnerships: Promote understanding of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework among Head Start grantees and other early child care partners

Attachment A

Head Start State Collaboration Offices: Information to Inform Planning in the Priority Areas

1. School Transitions
2. Professional Development
3. Child Care and Early Childhood Systems

Regional Office Priorities

1. Health Services
2. Services to Children Experiencing Homelessness
3. Services to Children with Disabilities
4. Child Welfare
5. Family Literacy
6. Welfare
7. Community Services
8. Military Families

1. School Transitions: Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs) will foster seamless transitions and long-term success of Head Start children by promoting continuity of services between the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework and state early learning standards including pre-k entry assessment and interoperable data systems. Activities of collaboration offices include, but are not limited to:

- Linking Head Start agencies with state-based Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) providers to facilitate the alignment of Head Start agencies' curricula and assessments with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and, as appropriate, with state early-learning standards and Kindergarten curricula.
- Expanding partnerships with local education agencies, including pre-kindergarten and transition-to-kindergarten programs;
- Enhancing the capacity of Head Start agencies to provide services to dual language learners and their families, and to promote and support appropriate curricula for limited English children;
- Consulting with chief state school officers to foster understanding of Head Start comprehensive services, align curricula and assessments, and promote partnerships between Head Start and local educational agencies;
- Fostering working relationships between Head Start grantees, local education agencies, and child care programs to establish comprehensive transition policies and practices that meet the needs of children, including children with disabilities and children experiencing homelessness;
- Promoting Head Start–pre-k partnerships and facilitating the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) to increase the number of low-income children who receive Head Start comprehensive services and family support;

- Enhancing linkages that support Head Start grantees as they move to evidence-based curricula and assessment, and implement early math, literacy, and science throughout the curriculum; and
- Increasing the capacity of Head Start grantees to collaborate with local museums, public and school libraries, and other resources to provide learning experiences for Head Start children.

2. Professional Development: HSSCOs will collaborate with institutions of higher education to promote professional development through education and credentialing programs for early childhood providers in states. Activities of collaboration offices include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the work of state T/TA providers in their work with Head Start agencies to enable them to meet the Head Start degree requirements for teachers, assistant teachers, education managers and other staff as described in section 648A(a)(2)(A);
- Assisting to connect Head Start agencies with higher education agencies that provide distance learning programs;
- As a member of the State Advisory Council, supporting the Council’s efforts to promote and enhance state-level planning, policy development, and implementation to create a state-wide professional development system that includes inter-institutional articulation agreements and credit for life experiences; and
- Connecting and working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal colleges and universities, Hispanic/Latino service institutions, and other higher education institutions to increase the number of Head Start teachers, assistant teachers and education managers who meet the Head Start required specifications

3. Child Care and Early Childhood Systems: HSSCOs will coordinate activities, referrals, and resources with the state agency responsible for the state Child and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program and resource and referral, to make full-working day and full-calendar year child care services available to children. They will also include the Head Start Program Performance Standards in state efforts to rate the quality of programs (Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)) and support Head Start programs when participating in QRIS and partnering with child care and early childhood systems at the local level. Activities of collaboration offices include, but are not limited to:

- Promoting collaboration between state education agencies and state child care licensing agencies to improve the standards of quality and reduce regulatory barriers facing early childhood programs, and encouraging the inclusion of the Head Start Program Performance Standards in state efforts to rate the quality of programs (often QRIS);
- Supporting Head Start programs participation in state efforts to rate the quality of programs;
- Building linkages between Head Start, local child care resource and referral agencies, and the state child care agency (CCDBG);
- Ensuring collaboration between Head Start agencies and local child care programs to ensure that quality, full-working day and full-calendar year services are available to children and families who need them;

- Facilitating Head Start involvement in child care quality improvement and licensing initiatives;
- Collaborating with state child care administrators to build capacity in child care agencies for quality infant toddler care through linkages with Head Start professional development and curriculum development;
- Promoting interoperability between the Head Start data system(s) and those of state preschool and k-12 systems that includes the assignment of unique State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) that remain with students throughout their pre-k-12 public education so that Head Start participants can be included in state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies, and tracking systems to demonstrate sustainable educational outcomes; and
- Promoting the inclusion of the Head Start Program Performance Standards in state QRIS standards to support state system building efforts and eliminate duplicative and burdensome requirements. The Office of Head Start (OHS) will provide documentation that local programs can use to participate in a state's QRIS.

Regional office priorities may include:

Health Services: To promote access to timely health care services, including general health, oral health, and mental health services.

- Partner with state Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems and other state-wide health initiatives to ensure that low income children receive comprehensive health services;
- Facilitate the expansion of integrated nutrition and physical activity programs, such as I am Moving, I am Learning, into curriculum of Head Start grantees and daily experiences for children birth to five;
- Play an active role in implementing OHS Dental Homes Initiative by serving on state leadership teams to ensure all Head Start children have a dental home;
- Promote partnerships to ensure all eligible children receive the full range of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), community clinics, and private providers, and that all necessary follow-up is completed for physical, mental, and oral health;
- Enhance state partnerships with Health Services Advisory Committees to ensure all children are enrolled in health insurance, including Medicaid and CHIP;
- Facilitate the development of contingency plans within Head Start agencies for coping with sick staff and sick children to avoid the spread of illnesses;
- Promote partnerships to support the unique needs of Early Head Start grantees through linkages with community services such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), La Leche League, Public Health Nursing, and others;
- Assisting Head Start agencies that serve pregnant women to identify community resources that provide prenatal and post-partum education and care, including mental health services; and

- Linking Head Start grantees with state and regional representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to promote joint initiatives such as Care for Their Air and Play it Safe to protect children from environmental hazards such as second and third hand smoke, asthma triggers, pests, and pesticides.

Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness: To support access to services for children and families experiencing homelessness through coordination with state and local education agencies implementing McKinney-Vento requirements.

- Improve coordination between Head Start agencies and state and local McKinney-Vento coordinators or directors;
- Promote partnerships that support Head Start agencies in addressing barriers to serving children and families experiencing homelessness;
- Enable partnerships between Head Start agencies, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuums of Care networks, and state homeless education directors; and
- Assist Head Start state-based T/TA providers to coordinate the needs of Head Start agencies and the community to strengthen practices for serving children and families experiencing homelessness.

Services to Children with Disabilities: To increase opportunities for children with disabilities.

- Work with the State Interagency Coordinating Councils established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to promote policies and practices that support the effective inclusion of Head Start and Early Head Start children with disabilities;
- Collaborate with organizations in Head Start's T/TA network to coordinate activities and resources for children with disabilities and their families;
- Facilitate the inclusion of Head Start representatives, including representatives from American Indian/Alaska Native and Migrant grantees operating in their states, on state-wide interagency activities addressing the needs of low-income children with disabilities;
- Encourage the coordination and participation of local Head Start personnel in the state's child identification efforts (Child Find) and other early identification activities; and
- Facilitate coordination between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Part C/Early Identification for approaches that promote the timely referral, evaluation, and transition of children from Head Start into elementary school in accordance with federal, state and local requirements.

Child Welfare: To improve or enhance coordination with child welfare services, including foster care and child protective services.

- Assist Head Start grantees to improve local coordination with child welfare;
- Help Head Start grantees align child welfare parent involvement goals with Head Start parent engagement goals, including self-sufficiency;

- Partner with the Children’s Bureau’s Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care grant initiative;
- Link Head Start grantees to local agencies implementing the Strengthening Families initiative; and
- Facilitate linkages between home-visiting programs, such as nurse-family partnerships, and home-based Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

Family and Community Partnerships may include:

Family Literacy: To promote and support state and local connections that enhance family literacy.

- Promote understanding of Head Start's definition of family literacy among Head Start grantees;
- Coordinate financial literacy opportunities using existing community or state resources and programs, including the adult education system and/or local financial institutions;
- Work with the state adult education system to improve coordination at the local level;
- Facilitate collaboration with state and donors agencies to provide Head Start children with books to own and use at home;
- Ensure Head Start representation in state-wide initiatives to develop or improve literacy curriculums for caregivers;
- Assist with coordination of state-based T/TA system initiatives to increase family literacy with needs of Head Start grantees; and
- Facilitate coordination between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, LEAs, and Part C/Early Identification for approaches that promote the timely referral, evaluation, and transition of children from Head Start into elementary school in accordance with Federal, state, and local requirements.

Welfare: To encourage and support collaboration with welfare systems (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program).

- Assist Head Start grantees to secure TANF information needed to identify and recruit children eligible for Head Start;
- Assist Head Start grantees in developing partnerships with welfare agencies and employers to provide appropriate training and employment opportunities for Head Start parents;
- Facilitate collaboration between Head Start agencies and the welfare system to provide flexibility for Head Start parents as they move along the continuum of education, training, and part-time employment to full-time employment; and
- Develop partnerships to broaden the availability of training for Head Start family services staff and entry level training for welfare recipients who wish to enter the early childhood field.

Community Services: To promote and support full utilization of relevant community services, including public schools, public libraries, museums, and law enforcement agencies, and promote effective outreach efforts to Head Start-eligible families.

- Assist Head Start agencies in developing public and private partnerships to increase and coordinate resources for Head Start and other early childhood programs;
- Serve as the state point of contact for agencies and planners seeking information about Head Start policies, procedures, and services;
- Assist Head Start agencies to establish partnerships with local service agencies and volunteer organizations to build or increase their capacity;
- Provide for Head Start representation on state and local planning and policy boards related to services for low-income families;
- Through the regional offices, assisting Head Start grantees in planning and coordinating with relevant local entities for emergency preparedness;
- Increase the capacity of Head Start grantees to collaborate with local museums, public and school libraries, and other resources to provide learning experiences for Head Start children;
- Promote partnerships between Head Start agencies and law enforcement, relevant community-based organizations, and substance abuse and mental health agencies to reduce the impact on child development of substance abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence;
- Expand the capacity of Head Start agencies to collaborate with private and public entities to effectively recruit eligible children and families to Head Start, such as linking Head Start programs with state Public Radio initiatives to reach low income families.

Military Families: To promote outreach by Head Start grantees to military families whose children do not have access to quality early childhood services when located away from military installations.

Attachment B

Survey Questionnaire: Survey was conducted via Survey Monkey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014HSNeedsAssessmentSurvey>

- A) The instructions outlined background information, the purpose behind the survey, as well as directions for completing the survey:

The Head Start Act (as amended December 12, 2007) requires the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs) to conduct a needs assessment of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. This questionnaire will start by asking the level of collaboration you feel you currently have with state and local service partners. It will also ask that you indicate areas you would like more focused efforts in throughout the next year. These areas are the Federal and Regional Priorities. The purpose of gathering this information is to identify needs in specified areas, as to inform activities within the annually revised strategic plan for the state.

Consider the past 12 months (May 2012-May 2013) when completing Part 1: Collaboration. Consider the next 12 months (June 2013- May 2014) when answering Part 2: Identifying Needs.

The Head Start Act also requires the HSSCOs to use the results of the needs assessment to develop a strategic plan outlining how they will assist and support Head Start grantees in meeting the requirements of the Head Start Act. HSSCOs must also annually update the needs assessment and strategic plan. The results of the needs assessment will be made available to the general public within the State, the Office of Head Start, regional office, and other partners. The cumulative findings from this needs assessment survey will assist the Head Start Collaboration Office, Head Start support systems, and other early childhood initiatives.

For the purposes of data tracking and follow-up, please indicate the name of your program. All program information is confidential and will be "de-identified" in the final document. Contact me if you have any questions: cjensen@mt.gov, 406.444.0589.

- B) Grantee Information was collected for the purposes of follow-up, data tracking, as well as to eliminate opportunity for duplication.

Questions:

- 1. Name and title of person(s) completing this survey**
- 2. Name of the Head Start or Early Head Start Agency**
- 3. Email and phone number that should be used to follow-up, if needed**

C) Part 1: Collaboration (Matrix Question)

Please reflect on the past 12 months (May 2012-May 2013) when answering the following questions:

4. To what extent does your Head Start and/or Early Head program partner with the following community and state support services?

Please mark each area once. Choices are:

- High-level Collaboration
- Moderate Collaboration
- Limited Collaboration
- None/Not Applicable

	High Level Collaboration	Moderate Collaboration	Limited Collaboration	None/Not Applicable
School Districts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Early Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Care R&R Agencies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Head Start T/TA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
STARS to Quality (QRIS) coaches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Striving Readers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Care Centers (for the continuation of full-day, year-round, services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infant Mental Health Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toddler Mental Health Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3-5 year old Mental Health Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental Health Counseling Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homelessness Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transitional Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family Resource Centers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parenting Classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNAP (food stamps)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Healthy Montana Kids/SCHIP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
WIC	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TANF	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CACFP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No Kid Hungry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food Pantries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Health Department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Additional Home Visiting (i.e. MIECHV)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Health Centers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pediatric Practices/Clinics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Home Providers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Dental Home Providers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Welfare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Military Family Liaisons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

D) Part 2: Identifying Needs

The following questions will help guide the objectives of the HSSCO in the next year (2014-2015). They align with the Head Start State Collaboration Office State and Regional Priority Areas. Please select your top three choices per question.

Questions:

5. School Transitions: Of the following choices, what would you like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Facilitation of alignment between Head Start curricula and assessments with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and, as appropriate, with state early-learning standards and Kindergarten curricula.
- Expanded partnerships with local education agencies, including pre-kindergarten and transition-to-kindergarten programs.
- Enhanced capacity of Head Start agencies to provide services to dual language learners and their families, and to promote and support appropriate curricula for limited English children.
- Consultation with chief state school officers to foster understanding of Head Start comprehensive services, align curricula and assessments, and promote partnerships between Head Start and local educational agencies.
- Consultation with chief state school officers to foster understanding of Head Start comprehensive services, align curricula and assessments, and promote partnerships between Head Start and local educational agencies.
- Increased capacity of Head Start grantees to collaborate with local museums, public and school libraries, and other resources to provide learning experiences for Head Start children.
- Other (Please Specify)

6. Professional Development: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Support from T/TA providers to work with Head Start grantees to meet Head Start degree requirements for teachers, assistant teachers, education managers and other staff as described in section 648A(a)(2)(A).

- Assistance in connecting Head Start agencies with higher education agencies that provide distance learning programs.
- Assistance in understanding and navigating the state-wide professional development system.
- Connection and work with higher education institutions to increase the number of Head Start teachers, assistant teachers and education managers who meet the Head Start required specifications.
- Other (Please Specify)

7. Child Care and Early Childhood Systems: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Increased collaboration between state education agencies and state child care licensing agencies to improve the standards of quality and reduce regulatory barriers facing early childhood programs, and encouraging the inclusion of the Head Start Program Performance Standards in state efforts to rate the quality of programs (QRIS/Montana STARS to Quality).
- Increased number of Head Start programs participating in the Montana STARS to Quality field test for efforts to rate the quality of programs.
- Additional linkages between Head Start, local child care resource and referral agencies, and the state child care agency (CCDBG).
- Increased collaboration between Head Start agencies and local child care programs to ensure that quality, full-working day and full-calendar year services are available to children and families who need them.
- Additional information about child care quality improvement and licensing initiatives.
- Build capacity in child care agencies for quality infant toddler care through linkages with Head Start professional development and curriculum development.
- Interoperability between the Head Start data system(s) and those of state preschool and k-12 systems that includes the assignment of unique State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) that remain with students throughout their pre-k-12 public education so that Head Start participants can be included in state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies, and tracking systems to demonstrate sustainable educational outcomes.
- Promote the inclusion of the Head Start Program Performance Standards in Montana STARS to Quality standards to support state system building efforts and eliminate duplicative and burdensome requirements.
- Increased collaboration between Governor's Office, state education agencies, and HS/EHS concerning proposal for Pre-K and partnerships between school districts and HS programs.

- Other (Please Specify)

8. Health Services: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Increased partnership with state Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems and other state-wide health initiatives to ensure that low income children receive comprehensive health services.
- Expansion of integrated nutrition and physical activity programs, such as I am Moving, I am Learning, into curriculum of Head Start grantees.
- Connect dental health providers to programs so all Head Start children have a dental home.
- Promote partnerships to ensure all eligible children receive the full range of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), community clinics, and private providers, and that all necessary follow-up is completed for physical, mental, and oral health.
- Enhance state partnerships to ensure all children are enrolled in health insurance, including Healthy Montana Kids (HMK), SCHIP and CHIP.
- Facilitate the development of contingency plans within Head Start agencies for coping with sick staff and sick children to avoid the spread of illnesses.
- Promote partnerships to support the unique needs of Early Head Start grantees through linkages with community services such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), La Leche League, Public Health Nursing, and others.
- Assisting Head Start agencies that serve pregnant women to identify community resources that provide prenatal and post-partum education and care, including mental health services.
- Linking Head Start grantees with state and regional representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to promote joint initiatives to protect children from environmental hazards such as second and third hand smoke, asthma triggers, pests, and pesticides.
- Increased understanding of early childhood trauma, toxic stress, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how Head Start programs can better educate staff and parents on this topic.
- Other (please specify)

9. Services to Children who are Experiencing Homelessness: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Improved coordination between Head Start agencies and state and local McKinney-Vento coordinators or directors.

- Promote partnerships that support Head Start agencies in addressing barriers to serving children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Enable partnerships between Head Start agencies, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) continuum of Care networks, and state homeless education directors.
- Assist Head Start state-based T/TA providers to coordinate the needs of Head Start agencies and the community to strengthen practices for serving children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Other (please specify)

10. Services to Children with Disabilities: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Work with IDEA, Part C and Part B to promote policies and practices that support the effective inclusion of Head Start and Early Head Start children with disabilities.
- Collaborate with organizations in Head Start's T/TA network to coordinate activities and resources for children with disabilities and their families.
- Facilitate the inclusion of Head Start representatives, including representatives from American Indian/Alaska Native and Migrant grantees operating in their states, on state-wide interagency activities addressing the needs of low-income children with disabilities.
- Facilitate the coordination and participation of local Head Start personnel in the state's child identification efforts (Child Find) and other early identification activities.
- Facilitate coordination between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Part C/Early Identification for approaches that promote the timely referral, evaluation, and transition of children from Head Start into elementary school in accordance with federal, state and local requirements.
- Other (please specify)

11. Child Welfare: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Head Start grantees receive assistance to improve local coordination with child welfare.
- Help Head Start grantees align child welfare parent involvement goals with Head Start parent engagement goals, including self-sufficiency.
- Link Head Start grantees to local agencies implementing the Strengthening Families initiative; and learn more about the strengthening Families model.

- Facilitate linkages between home-visiting programs, such as Nurse-Family Partnerships, Parents as Teachers, and home-based Early Head Start and Head Start programs.
- Other (please specify)

12. Family and Community Partnerships: Of the following choices, what would you most like to see improve in the next year? (Please select three choices)

- Promote understanding of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework among Head Start grantees and other early child care partners.
- Coordinated financial literacy opportunities using existing community or state resources and programs, including the adult education system and/or local financial institutions.
- Facilitate collaboration with donor agencies to provide Head Start children with books to own and use at home as a measure to increase literacy.
- Facilitate opportunities to learn about literacy programs at the state level, such as efforts around dialogic reading and initiatives at the Office of Public Instruction (Striving Readers, etc.).
- Collaborate on state-based T/TA system initiatives to increase family literacy with needs of Head Start grantees.
- Assist Head Start grantees in developing partnerships with welfare agencies and employers to provide appropriate training and employment opportunities for Head Start parents.
- Facilitate collaboration between Head Start agencies and the welfare system to provide flexibility for Head Start parents as they move along the continuum of education, training, and part-time employment to full-time employment.
- Assist Head Start agencies in developing public and private partnerships to increase and coordinate resources for Head Start and other early childhood programs.
- Assist Head Start agencies to establish partnerships with local early childhood coalitions.
- Increase the capacity of Head Start grantees to collaborate with local museums, public and school libraries, and other resources to provide learning experiences for Head Start children.
- Increase partnerships between Head Start agencies and law enforcement, relevant community-based organizations, and substance abuse and mental health agencies to reduce the impact on child development of substance abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence.
- Link Head Start grantees to military families whose children do not have access to quality early childhood services when located away from military installations.
Other (please specify)

The following are open-ended questions:

- 13. Please identify one strength of your program:**
- 14. Please identify one gap or need you would like to see addressed in the next year through the HSSCO (if not indicated in Part 2):**
- 15. Please include any additional thoughts or feedback to help the Head Start State Collaboration Office best meet your needs and build off of your strengths when developing a work plan. Information will be used to better coordinate and connect Head Start in the next year. Anything that will help inform the state planning process will be very helpful. Again, this information will remain de-identified and confidential.**

The content you provided will be instrumental to the work of the HSSCO, state and local partners, T/TA, as well as the Region VIII and XI Offices. Information about your program will not be included in the final Needs Assessment report, and responses will not be linked to your program. Have a great summer and contact me if you have any questions: krich@mt.gov or 406.444.0589. Thank you!