

# PRESENTER PROFILES

(alphabetical by last name)



## JENNIFER CALDER

Jennifer Calder is the Outreach and Communications Director for Montana KIDS COUNT. Based at the University of Montana, Montana KIDS COUNT is committed to disseminating data and research to inform policy decisions that affect children and families in the state. She has worked in the family engagement field since 2006 providing training and technical assistance to schools and early care and education professionals. Prior to this

she taught 4th grade in Austin, Texas.

## VALERIE CUNDALL & KELLY ACKERMAN

Valerie Cundall and Kelly Ackerman are Parent and Community Educators for Florence Crittenton Home. Together they have 35+ years of experience working with children and families, particularly those facing significant life challenges. Val served for 3 years as the Early Childhood Coordinator working to support and expand the work of Helena's Early Childhood Coalition and has also served on the Best Beginnings State Advisory Council and the Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development. Kelly is an early childhood music teacher, and works to promote healthy families through Helena Parent Connections. Both Val and Kelly are trained in the Love and Logic and Circle of Security parenting models as well as Parents As Teachers home visiting. They regularly facilitate parenting and life skills classes through the FCH Outreach Center.



## JUDY EDWARDS

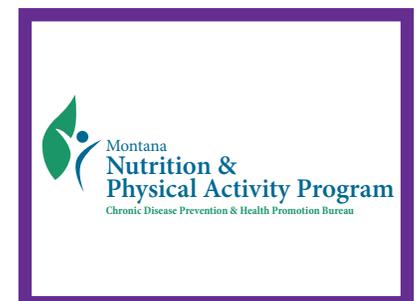


Ms. Edwards has worked to reduce infant mortality for over 35 years. She was one of the first infant mortality review coordinators in the nation when the March of Dimes and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funded the initial program. As a health policy analyst Ms. Edwards has worked on state and federal legislation to improve access to health care for women and children. In that capacity she was the state lead for the Western

Governors' Association on Indian health policy to assure better interface between federal, state and tribal health programs to improve maternal and child health.

## EMILY EPPERSON

Emily's professional background includes work as a Certified Athletic Trainer and a Certified Health Education Specialist. Emily is very passionate about promoting overall health and wellness by integrating with communities to identify their needs and work within those confines to create policies and programs that will be effective, efficient, and sustainable.



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## AMY FOSTER WOLFERTMAN

Amy Foster Wolfertman, M.Ed., serves as Assistant Director of the Institute for Educational Research and Service (IERS). She provides technical assistance to educators, families, and community members in school safety issues including positive behavioral interventions and supports, school safety assessment, bullying prevention, suicide prevention, trauma, secondary traumatic stress, self-care and topics in the field of early childhood. Ms.

Foster Wolfertman serves as a Montana Behavioral Initiative Consultant in a partnership with IERS and the Office of Public Instruction. She has a background in teaching, early childhood education, special education, and working with teen-aged youth in the outdoors.

## TODD GARRISON

Since 2003 Todd Garrison has devoted himself to the work of helping and healing young traumatized children. First at Intermountain, a Montana nonprofit that has been committed to the plight of vulnerable children for more than one-hundred years. His roles were in fund raising and project development. ChildWise Institute was one of those projects. Since 2009, he's been involved in the planning, launching and growth of ChildWise, a Montana not-for-profit 501c(3) organization. ChildWise is working hard to create safe, supportive families and communities for our nation's most vulnerable population -- children. ChildWise does this through three integrated strategies of advancing awareness, accelerating knowledge, and advocating for positive change.



## DAWN GORDON-WILCOX

Dawn Gordon-Wilcox is a Certified Breastfeeding Counselor and Certified Breastfeeding Specialist. She is a Peer Breastfeeding Counselor at Butte Silver Bow WIC and is a founder of the Butte Breastfeeding Coalition.



## DEB HALLIDAY

Deb Halliday currently serves as Policy Advisor to State Superintendent Denise Juneau at the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Her work includes launching Graduation Matters Montana, which seeks to increase the number of Montana students who graduate from high school ready for their next steps in life; and Montana Schools of Promise, which works to dramatically improve the state's most struggling schools, all of which are on Montana's Indian Reservations. Deb is a graduate of Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs' Master's program in Public Administration, where she focused on Social Welfare Policy, and has over 20 years' experience working with local, state and national organizations on social welfare policy initiatives.



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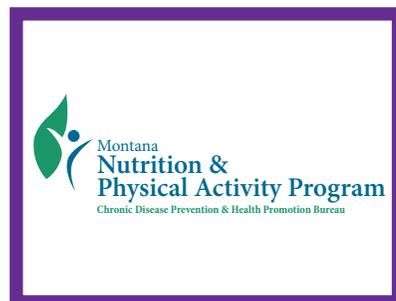


## CHRISTY HILL LARSON

Christy Hill Larson has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Washington State University and has worked in the field of early childhood education in a variety of capacities for thirty-eight years. Her experience includes working as a lead teacher in a private nonprofit child care center, a Head Start teacher, a Head Start home visitor, the director of a child care center, an early childhood consultant and trainer, an early childhood advocate, and the Executive Director of the Montana Head Start Association. Currently, she is a special projects coordinator for the Early Childhood Project at MSU.

## TERRY MILLER

As an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC/RLC) and Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC), Terry Miller has spent the last 8 years supporting and working with breastfeeding families and communities in Montana. As the Senior Breastfeeding Consultant with the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program, Terry helps facilitate the Montana Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative and also leads the Montana State Breastfeeding Coalition's mission to increase professional and family access to lactation resources and support across Montana.

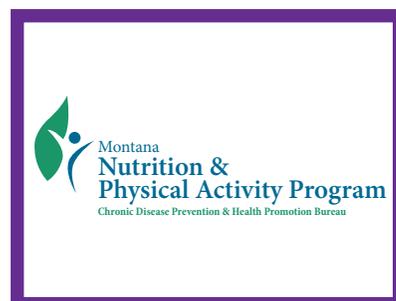


## TERESA NYGAARD

Teresa has been the executive director of The Parenting Place in Missoula for 13 years, and has been working in the field of child abuse prevention for more than 20 years. Two decades of prevention-focused efforts have only reinforced her belief that this is the area that needs the most attention and receives the least. Teresa earned her BSW through the University of Montana nearly 25 years ago and has since done everything from case management and parent education to leading an organization. She is also a "trainer" for Nurturing Parenting Programs, Darkness 2 Light and is an ACE Master Trainer for the State of Montana as well. Another highlight for Teresa is a joint partnership between The Parenting Place and The Family Tree Center of Billings in codirecting the Prevent Child Abuse MT Chapter. Teresa's passion for prevention and building strong families is fueled by her daughter, her step children and her 12 precious grandchildren. Her belief is that by reaching families early, we are saving children from needless trauma and creating an opportunity for them to have a happy and healthy childhood.

## LISA SCHMIDT

Lisa Schmidt is the epidemiologist/evaluator for the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Healthy Lifestyles Section. She monitors and analyzes data from multiple surveillance systems to help develop program goals and objectives.



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## KIM SPURZEM

Kim Spurzem is the Director of Youth Programs at National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) Missoula. Over the past few years she has focused her work on positive youth development, youth and adult partnerships, and empowering youth to be engaged citizens in their communities. Ms. Spurzem has helped launch multiple new programs, co-guided strategic visioning, and been integral in expanding NCBI youth development work across the state of Montana. She has a strong passion for research and institutional policy work and thrives to create leadership opportunities within community groups for youth in Montana to be civilly engaged. Beyond organizational work Ms. Spurzem has also trained thousands of youth, educators, and community members on developing skills for building safer and more inclusive schools and communities for everyone.

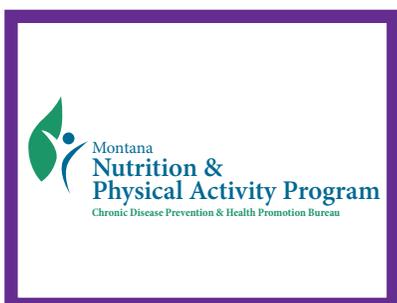
## KAREN VANNI

Karen Vanni is the financial education program director at Rural Dynamics, Inc. She facilitates all of RDI's financial training and education programs – assisting front-line staff around the nation in obtaining accreditations as credit and financial counselors and teaching financial education to adults and children K-12. In the past decade she has worked one-on-one with many individuals with big dreams and limited resources, helping them to achieve their lofty goals step by step. Ms. Vanni truly understand the importance of financial education of adults as well as children and is dedicated to delivering thoughtful, engaging education to Montanans to increase financial knowledge and positively change financial attitude and behaviors. Ms. Vanni is an NFCC Credit Counselor, NFCC Financial Educator and AFCPE Accredited Credit Counselor.



## JESSICA WELBORN

Jessica Welborn is the Co-Executive Director of the Mothers' Milk Bank of Montana. In 2011, Jessica completed a doctorate in Perinatal Psychology at the Santa Barbara Graduate Institute, with a focus on the psychological impact of donating breast milk following a perinatal loss. She wrote a toolkit based on her dissertation that provides healthcare providers with information about how to address lactation with bereaved mothers. Jessica worked for two years as the Donor Coordinator at the Mothers' Milk Bank in San Jose, California.



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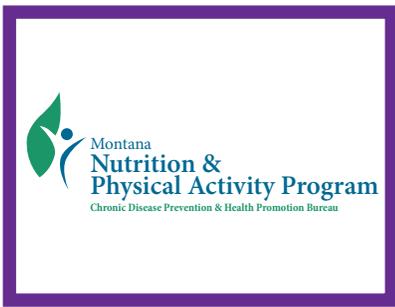
## PEARL YELLOWMAN

Pearl Yellowman is a member of the Navajo Nation and currently the Adolescent Counselor & Prevention Specialist for the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Tribal Health & Human Services, Behavioral Health Department. Pearl earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership, a Master's Degree in Counseling Education and is currently a Doctoral candidate at the University of Montana, in the Educational Leadership program focusing on the Contributing Factors of the Achievement Gap for Native American students. Pearl's traditional teachings include the Ho'zho' which translates into the Navajo Beauty Way.



## MANDI ZANTO

Mandi has been working in Public Health for the last 8 years. She began her Public Health Career with the Montana Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Program, working with the State WIC Program and the Lewis and Clark County WIC Clinic. Mandi has been with Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program from 2012 to the present.



July 7-9



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