



MONTANA EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCOUNT (MECA) DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING AND STAFF SUPPORT GRANT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the grant is to support early childhood providers in implementing developmental screening practices and participating in professional development opportunities by increasing access to necessary technology and offsetting related staffing costs.

Grant funds may be used to purchase technology that supports participation in virtual or in-person training and the administration of developmental screening tools. Funds may also be used to offset costs associated with staff participation in approved training, including overtime wages or substitute coverage.

TIMELINE

Anticipated Application Deadline: August 3, 2026

Anticipated Award Notification: September 2026

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are licensed early childhood programs, centers, family, or group programs, serving children ages 0–5. Individual providers are not eligible. Applicants must provide an active PV number as part of the application.

Grants will be awarded on a per-program basis, with one award available per eligible program.

ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS

Grant funds may be used to support early childhood programs in implementing developmental screening practices and participating in professional development opportunities. Technology purchased through the grant may also be used to support communication with families regarding screening results. Allowable uses include technology and staffing-related expenses that directly support these activities, such as:

- Laptop or tablet computer
- Mobile hotspot device to support reliable internet access
- Webcam, headset, or other basic accessories needed for active virtual engagement



- Staff salaries to actively participate in training (virtual or in-person) or administering assessments
- Substitute pay for staff to actively participate in training (virtual or in-person) or administering assessments
- Course fees
- Subscription fees for developmental screening tools

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Programs receiving a grant are expected to participate in the developmental screening training series and any required follow-up activities, including surveys and reporting on implementation.

A list of suggested trainings has been provided to support programs in selecting high-quality, aligned professional development opportunities. While programs are strongly encouraged to select from this list, we recognize that other relevant and high-quality trainings may be available. Programs may propose alternative trainings that align with the required training categories; these must be clearly outlined in the application and submitted for approval. Participants are required to complete one training from each category; Developmental Knowledge, Developmental Screening, and Supporting Implementation.

If funds are used for technology, recipients must provide receipts for all purchases. Applicants must also outline the trainings their staff will attend, identify which staff will participate, and provide associated costs, including overtime or substitute coverage, to ensure funds directly support professional development and implementation of developmental screening practices.

TRAINING PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Developmental Knowledge

Participants must complete at least one (1) training focused on child development or developmental differences. Options include but are not limited to:

Teaching Strategies

- Amazing Development: Infants (4 hours, \$350)
- Amazing Development: Toddlers (4 hours, \$350)
- Amazing Development: Preschoolers (4 hours, \$350)
- Developmental Milestones: Look At Me Know! (Teaching Strategies, 5 hours, \$350)
- Recognizing Developmental Differences Learning Path (Teaching Strategies, 5 hours, \$350)

AIR Training Solutions



- A Child First! Understanding Special Needs (3hours, \$30.95)
- Exploring the Spectrum: A Guide to Autism (2hours, \$20.95)
- Decoding ADHD (2hours, \$20.95)
- Understanding Oppositional Defiant Disorder (2hours, \$20.95)
- Dyslexia: A Different Ability (2hours, \$20.95)

SPARK

- Autism 101 (2hours, Free)

Child Care Training (CCT)

- Look Who's Talking Too: Language and Literacy Development in Infants and Toddlers (2 hours, \$24)
- Look Who's Talking Too: Language and Literacy Development in Preschoolers (2 hours, \$24)

Developmental Screening

Participants must complete at least one (1) training focused on developmental screening. Options include but are not limited to:

Teaching Strategies

- The Nuts and Bolts of Developmental Screening (Teaching Strategies, 3 hours, \$350)

Child Care Training (CCT)

- Developmental Screening: Develop a process to identify and support individual child development, promote family engagement, and enhance program quality (CCT, 4 hours, FREE for MT providers)

Supporting Implementation

Participants must complete at least one (1) training that supports implementation, inclusion, behavior, or family engagement. Options include but are not limited to:

SPARK

- Supporting Families of Children with Disabilities (2 hours, Free)
- Helping Children with Emotional Regulation (2 hours, Free)

Child Care Training (CCT)

- Inclusion 1 (15 hours, Free)
- Inclusion 2 (30 hours, Free)
- Introduction to the Pyramid Model (2 hours, Free)
- E-Pyramid Model Birth to Five – Module 1 (6 hours, Free)
- E-Pyramid Model Birth to Five – Module 2 (6 hours, Free)
- E-Pyramid Model Birth to Five – Module 3 (6 hours, Free)
- The Sandbox Project (2 hours, Free)



- Full Spectrum Support (4 hours, \$48)

GRANT AMOUNT

Grant funds are intended to support early childhood programs in both purchasing reliable technology and offsetting costs associated with staff participation in developmental screening training. This ensures programs have the resources needed to both engage in professional development and implement developmental screening practices effectively.

Award amounts will vary based on each program’s needs. Funds may be used for:

- Technology purchases, including laptops, mobile hotspot devices, and basic accessories necessary for virtual training participation and implementation of developmental screening practices.
- Financial support to cover training fee, staff participation costs, including overtime wages or substitute coverage for training or administering developmental screenings.

TABLE 1: GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS

	Program Size	Amount
Group 1	1-29 slots	\$1,500
Group 2	30-70 slots	\$2,000
Group 3	71-200 slots	\$2,500
Group 4	+200 slots	\$3,000

USE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

Funds awarded through the grant may be used for technology purchases and financial support for staff participation in approved training.

Technology purchased with grant funds remains the property of the participating program. Equipment is intended to support participation in the developmental screening training series, implementation of developmental screening practices, and ongoing program activities, including communication with families regarding screening results.

Programs are responsible for maintaining documentation of how grant funds are used, including receipts for technology purchases and records of staff participation in trainings and associated costs. This ensures accountability and supports the continued



use of resources to strengthen professional development and developmental screening practices.

Failure to meet program requirements, including incomplete participation in training, misuse of funds, or failure to provide required documentation, may result in a request for partial or full repayment of grant funds.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested programs will complete and submit an application through the Submittable platform describing their program needs, including technology and/or financial support for staff participation, and their plan for engaging in the developmental screening training series.

Following approval, recipients will be required to submit documentation to verify appropriate use of funds. This includes receipts or proof of purchase for technology and documentation of staff participation in approved trainings, along with associated costs such as overtime wages or substitute coverage. Reimbursement will not exceed the approved grant amount.



DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING GRANT APPLICATION

SECTION 1: PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Program Name:
2. License Picture:
3. License Status:
4. UEI Number:
5. PV Number:
6. Program Address:
7. Program Contact Name:
8. Contact Email:
9. Contact Phone Number:

SECTION 2: CURRENT NEED

1. Please indicate the primary area(s) of need for your program (select all that apply):
 - Technology to support participation in virtual or hybrid training
 - Technology to support administration of developmental screening tools
 - Financial support for staff participation in training (staff wages or substitute coverage)
 - Financial support to cover training fees
2. Please describe your program's current capacity in the areas selected above. Include any existing technology and/or staffing supports that are currently in place.
3. Please describe the specific challenges or barriers your program faces in these areas. Consider limitations related to technology access, staffing capacity, or the ability to support staff participation in training.
4. How will addressing these needs support your program's ability to participate in training and implement developmental screening practices?

SECTION 3: BUDGET NARRATIVE

Budget Narrative Instructions

The budget narrative provides an explanation of how grant funds will be used and how each expense supports your program's participation in training and implementation of developmental screening practices. This narrative should clearly connect your funding request to the needs identified in your application.

1. Provide an Overview
 - State the total amount of funding requested.



- Briefly describe how funds will be used (e.g., technology, staffing support, training costs).
2. Describe Program Goals
 - Explain what your program aims to achieve with this funding.
 - Describe how these goals support participation in training and the implementation of developmental screening practices.
 3. Explain Budget Categories
Provide a brief description for each category included in your budget:
 - **Technology:** Equipment such as laptops, tablets, or internet access needed to support training and screening activities.
 - **Staffing Support:** Costs related to staff participation, including overtime wages or substitute coverage.
 - **Training Fees:** Costs associated with approved professional development opportunities.
 - **Screening Tools/Subscriptions:** Fees for developmental screening tools or related platforms.
 - **Other (if applicable):** Any additional allowable expenses that support training participation or screening implementation.
 4. Align Budget to Need
 - Clearly explain how each expense supports the needs identified in your application.
 - Ensure all requested funds directly contribute to staff participation in training and implementation of developmental screening practices.

SECTION 4: PROPOSED USE OF FUNDS

1. Based on the needs identified above, indicate how your program will use grant funds (select all that apply):
 - Technology purchases
 - Financial support for staff participation
 - Subscription fees or other costs associated with developmental
2. Complete the table below to outline how funds will be used to support staff participation.

TABLE 2: STAFF PARTICIPATION DETAIL

Staff Name	Role	Training(s) to attend	Cost of Equipment	Cost of Trainings	Staffing Costs	Total Cost

SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION

1. Describe how your program will ensure staff participation in the developmental screening training series.
2. Identify which staff will be responsible for administering developmental screenings and how they will be supported.
3. Describe how your program will implement developmental screening practices following the training.
4. How will your program use the purchased technology and/or staffing support to sustain these practices over time?

SECTION 6: ACKNOWLEDGMENT/AGREEMENT SECTION

By submitting this application, the program agrees to:

- Participate in required training and follow-up activities
- Use funds only for approved purposes
- Submit required documentation for reimbursement
- Comply with all mini-grant requirements

Name:

Signature:

Date: