# Montana Children's Trust Fund Board Meeting Minutes
## Tuesday, April 29, 2025
## USFG Corner Conference Room

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**Present:** Jeri Delys, Brandi Loch, David Landis

**Staff present:** Josh Kendrick (Early Prevention/Intervention Program Manager), MacKenzie Forbis (CTF Manager) Lona Gregor-Martin (CTF ARPA Program Specialist), Susan Wensel (CTF Budget Analyst), Alex Dahy (CTF Administrative Assistant)

**Guest present**: Kristi Pontet-Stroop, Heidi Lee, Maggie Sheehy, Toni Arocha, Jamie Rettig, Ariella Wells, Dakari Smilanich, Leesha Ford

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The Montana Children's Trust Fund Board Meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Chair David Landis.

No public comment was made.

Chair David Landis called for changes or edits to the draft for the December MT CTF Board Meeting minutes. No changes or edits were made. An oral vote was taken. Minutes were accepted as written unanimously.

## Board Business:

- **Board Welcome and review of December Meeting Minutes**
- **Introduce Josh**
  - Josh Kendrick was introduced as the new Early Intervention and Prevention Section Supervisor.
- **CTF Grantee Introductions and overview**
  - Mountain Home Montana is visiting from Missoula. They serve mothers and their children with services such as therapy, supportive education, employment programming, case management. They have transitional housing as well as outpatient programs and child care at Tony's Little House. There will be an open house for the new building on May 16, 2025. The new building will be open to the public sometime in July. Childcare is only currently serving ages 0-3, but with the expansion and the new building they are hoping to serve ages 0-5. They provide childcare for the residents, outpatient clients, and during evening classes. Many of the clients that they serve have Medicaid insurance since this is how their facility is compensated. Many of the residents live in the house for about 4-6 months. Transitional housing is usually 1-2 years. They have been in business since 2000.
  - Bitterroot Early Learning Network is a nonprofit that oversees Ravalli county for specialized services in early education. They have services for children and families and act as a referral and resource center. They do PD for early childhood educators in Ravalli County. There is also work being done with the local community college to create accreditation. They do a lot of collaboration to help uplift children and families in the area, as well as creating policy engagement at the state level to help advocate for children and funding bills that support the work. They recently hosted an early childhood summit. They use this event to help understand where their help is needed most in the community so

that they can fill the gaps. Their organization houses the Bitterroot early childhood coalition.
    - Toby's House Crisis nursery is a newer nonprofit. They have a house in Great Falls where they provide group childcare (crisis respite and transitional care) for children ages 0-6. They also provide resources and connections to services that are available within the community. They have accomplished many things in their short time of operation such as creating a diaper bank. About one in two families in Great Falls are diaper insecure. They are currently trying to expand their hours and services. This includes working with a group childcare home in Missoula to create some spaces for immediate crisis care for children. They will also be having their annual fundraiser this month.
- **CTF CRP Grantee Introductions and overview**
    - This is considered a differential response program where anyone can refer families to the community response program. It is for families who are potentially facing crisis, or where there is a pattern of behavior or events that could potentially lead toward child abuse and neglect. The program was created to reach those families and meet all of their needs before that abuse and neglect happens. Referrals come from anyone including CFSD, school staff, and hospital staff. The program runs anywhere from 8-16 weeks and provides referrals, services, and care coordination. Families create at least three goals within the timeframe that are specific for them. There are currently four pilot programs. These are structured within Butte 4-C's, Alliance for Youth, St. John's United, and Family Promise.
    - St. John's United offers high fidelity wrap around program out of Billings. They help families in a variety of situations. Their goal is to help keep children out of state care by connecting them to resources. Care coordinators can have up to fifteen families, this is because the program can be very intensive so a cap for caseload is needed. They also have peer support available for these families. The idea is that when participants leave the program, they have supports in place to assist them in times of crisis. They have also started a Parent Advisory Council. They do follow up with families once they graduate from the program to make sure they are still in a good spot and to make sure they have the resources they need.
    - Alliance for Youth has been in Great Falls for about forty years. The organization has changed rapidly over the last six years, especially since the development of their brick-and-mortar location. They have established a sober life program. They also host many groups such as NA, AA, Survivors of Sexual Assault, Grief, and Codependency. There are also volunteer opportunities available here. There is a youth resource center for disadvantaged and homeless youth (ages 13-20). They also have on site services such as laundry, showers, hygiene products, food pantry, employment support, and education support. They have many community partners that help establish the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
    - Butte 4-C's builds individualized programs to help families succeed. Outside of CRP they help families on a personal level to build skills and connect them with the resources that they need. They also work with the community to help families with the things that they need. They offer a variety of classes for parenting. They host events as well, the most recent being a community baby shower, where they collected items from community partners for families in need. They have been serving the community for over 50 years.
- **CRP Data update**
    - Lona presents the CRP data. Since May of 2023, there have been 375 referrals in total. These came from a variety of sources. Demographics for the caregivers were presented, as well as the number of children in households, the average ages of children per household, existing services received by families, and supports received by families from CRP.
- **MT CTF Budget Review**
    - State special revenue is over obligated for the $53,000 that is available; however, this is ideal as some expenses can be covered in the next period of available funds.

- **Endowment Reinvestment**
    - The STIP investment could be sold for about $100k. These would likely be sold mid-June 2025.
    - **There is a motion to sell 100k of the investment by the end of June 2025. Jeri seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous in favor of the motion.**
- **Board Updates**
    - There is a need to recruit people for the CTF board due to the number of sitting members who will be leaving. Jeri suggests reaching out to CASA organizations as well as the Western Montana Volunteer Center. MacKenzie can create a one-pager to send out for recruiting. MacKenzie will also be posting the board member application to the CTF website.
- **Wrap up additional board business**
    - MacKenzie will be sending out information for Windfall as well as the CTF Manager report.

Jeri Motions to adjourn the meeting, and this is unanimously favored by the board

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm