

## Montana Milestones Part C of IDEA Program

Region 3 Early Childhood Intervention Annual Performance Report for FFY 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

### Compliance Indicator 1: Timely Provision of Services

The percent of infants and toddlers with Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) who receive early intervention services on their IFSPs in a timely manner, within 30 days of the parent or guardian's consent. Any untimely receipt of services must include reasons for delays.

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<b>100%</b>	$(68)/(69) \times 100 =$ <b>98.6%</b>	Med Compass data Part C IFSP Services Report: 4/1/2022- 6/30/2022	Development of Part C IFSP Service Report deployed December 2022. Data system uses Timely Receipt of Services Task to collect data and pull timeliness into the report.

### Results Indicator 2: Services in Natural Environments

The percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or community-based settings.

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<b>94.94%</b>	$(251)/(258) \times 100 =$ <b>97.2%</b>	EI Module 7/1/2021 – 1/31/2022 Med Compass data extracts (2) Validation of data extracts (2)	Data collected from the data management system. Extracts were used during the

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			development of Part C Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time and Settings reports. Data system uses IFSP Care Plan to account for settings data. Development of both Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time reports were developed November 2022 to use going forward.
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Results Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes

The percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication) and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Summary Statement 1: Of those infants and toddlers who entered early intervention below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

Summary Statement 2: Of those infants and toddlers who were functioning within age expectations for each Outcome by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

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**A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)**

Summary Statement 1 Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
58.00%	$(44+37)/(3+62+44+37) \times 100 = 55.5\%$	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023.
Summary Statement 2 Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
32.00%	$(37+1)/(3+62+44+37+1) \times 100 = 25.9\%$	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023.

**B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)**

Summary Statement 1 Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
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<b>58.00%</b>	$(42+36)/(2+66+42+36) \times 100 =$ <b>53.4%</b>	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023.
<b>Summary Statement 2 Target</b>	<b>Region 3 Data</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>26.00%</b>	$(36+1)/(2+66+42+36+1) \times 100 =$ <b>25.2%</b>	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023..

**C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.**

<b>Summary Statement 1 Target</b>	<b>Region 3 Data</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>61.00%</b>	$(44+37)/(1+66+39+40) \times 100 =$ <b>54.1%</b>	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023.

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Summary Statement 2 Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
30.00%	$(37+1)/(1+66+ 39+ 40+ 1) \times 100 =$ <b>27.9%</b>	Med Compass data extract 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022  Validation of data extract	Extract was used while Part C report was developed. Child Outcome Summary report was developed April of 2023.

Results Indicator 4: Family Involvement

Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:

- A. Know their rights;
- B. Effectively communicate their children’s needs; and
- C. Help their children develop and grow.

**Know their rights.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
75.00%	$(28)/(33) =$ <b>84.84%</b>  This region was determined to be underrepresented in the Family Outcome Survey data and has met monthly with the	Agency self-report from paper survey and link survey collection.	Beginning with the FFY 2022 APR, The State must include race and ethnicity in its analysis. In addition, the State must include demographic data: MT selects

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	State to help strategize how to increase the response rate and representativeness.		geographic location and the methodology for collection was changed.
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**Effectively communicate their children’s needs.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<b>79.00%</b>	(30)/(33) = <b>90.90%</b>  This region was determined to be underrepresented in the Family Outcome Survey data and has met monthly with the State to help strategize how to increase the response rate and representativeness.	Agency self-report from paper survey and link survey collection.	Beginning with the FFY 2022 APR, The State must include race and ethnicity in its analysis. In addition, the State must include demographic data: MT selects geographic location and the methodology for collection was changed.

**Help their children develop and grow.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<b>74.00%</b>	(28)/(33) = <b>84.84%</b>  This region was determined to be	Agency self-report from paper survey and link survey collection.	Beginning with the FFY 2022 APR, The State must include race and ethnicity

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	<p>underrepresented in the Family Outcome Survey data and has met monthly with the State to help strategize how to increase the response rate and representativeness.</p>		<p>in its analysis. In addition, the State must include demographic data: MT selects geographic location and the methodology for collection was changed.</p>
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Results Indicator 5: Child Find (Birth to One)

Percent of infants and toddlers’ birth to 1 with IFSPs. Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA Part C Child Count and Settings data collection in the EdFacts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS) and Census (denominator).

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<p><b>.95%</b></p>	<p>(20)/(2378)x100 = <b>.84%</b></p>	<p>EI Module 7/1/2021 – 1/31/2022 Med Compass data extracts (2) Validation of data extracts (2)</p>	<p>Extract was used during the development of Part C Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time and Settings reports. Development of both Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time reports</p>

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			were developed November 2022 to use for future reporting.
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Results Indicator 6: Child Find (Birth to Three)

Percent of infants and toddlers’ birth to three with IFSPs. Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA Part C Child Count and Settings data collection in the EdFacts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS) and Census (denominator).

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
2.36%	$(258)/(7284) \times 100 = 3.54\%$	EI Module 7/1/2021– 1/31/2022 Med Compass data extracts (2) Validation of data extracts (2)	Extract was used during the development of Part C Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time and Settings reports. Development of both Child Count Cumulative and Child Count Point in Time reports were developed November 2022 to use for future reporting.



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Compliance Indicator 7: 45-Day Timeline

Percent of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs for whom an initial evaluation and initial assessment and an initial IFSP meeting were conducted within Part C’s 45-day timeline. Data must address the timeline from point of referral to initial IFSP meeting based on actual, not an average, number of days.

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
100%	$(65)/(73) \times 100 =$ <b>89%</b>	Med Compass data Part C IFSP Status Report: 4/1/2022- 6/30/2022	Part C IFSP Status report to report on this Indicator for FFY 2021. The data management system uses the parent signature date to determine timeliness of the 45-day timeline.

Compliance Indicator 8: Early Childhood Transition

Percent of toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C with timely transition planning for whom the Lead Agency has:

- A. Develop an IFSP with transition steps and services at least 90 days, and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months, prior to the toddler’s third birthday;
- B. Notified (consistent with any opt-out policy adopted by the State) the State Educational Agency (SEA) and the local educational agency (LEA) where the toddler resides at least 90 days prior to the toddler’s third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services; and
- C. Conducted the transition conference held with the approval of the family at least 90 days, and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months, prior to the toddler’s third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services.

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**Develop an IFSP with transition steps and services at least 90 days, and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months, prior to the toddler’s third birthday.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
100%	(24)/(24)x100 = <b>100%</b>	Med Compass data Part C Extract from 4/1/2022- 6/30/2022 for Transition Plan and Conference Extract  Validation of data extract	Extract was used to report on this Indicator for FFY 2021, while Part C Transition Plan and Conference report was developed. Data system uses Transition Plan to account for the development and timeliness of transition plan in IFSP.

**Notified (consistent with any opt-out policy adopted by the State) the State Educational Agency (SEA) and the local educational agency (LEA) where the toddler resides at least 90 days prior to the toddler’s third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
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<b>100%</b>	$(24)/(24) \times 100 =$ <b>100%</b>	Med Compass data Part C Extract from 4/1/2022- 6/30/2022 for LEA Notification Extract  Validation of data extract	Extract was used to report on this Indicator for FFY 2021, while LEA Notification report was developed. Data system uses Transition Plan to account for the timeliness of notification or if a parent opts out.
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**Conducted the transition conference held with the approval of the family at least 90 days, and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months, prior to the toddler’s third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services.**

Target	Region 3 Data	Data Sources	Comments
<b>100%</b>	$(24)/(24) \times 100 =$ <b>100%</b>	Med Compass data Part C Extract from 4/1/2022- 6/30/2022 for Transition Plan and Conference Extract  Validation of data extract	Extract was used to report on this Indicator for FFY 2021, while Transition Plan and Conference report was developed. Data system uses Transition Plan to account for the timeliness of

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			transition conference, or if a parent opts out.
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Results Indicator 10: Mediation

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA Dispute Resolution Survey in the ED*Facts* Metadata and Process System (EMAPS).

Region 2 reported no mediation requests.

For the FFY 2021 (July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022) APR, MT collected the number of disputes resolved at the local level for each agency.

Compliance Indicator 11: State Systemic Improvement Plan

The State’s APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth: a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The State provided baseline data which is aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The State provided measurable and rigorous targets for each of the six years from FFY 2020 through FFY 2025.

**SiMR:** Outcome A, Summary Statement 1: Of those infants and toddlers who entered early intervention below age expectations in Outcome A, Positive Social-Emotional Skills (including positive relationships), the percent who substantially increased by the time they turned three years of age or exited the program.

**FFY 2021 Target: 58%**                      **Region 1 Data: 55.5%**

**Summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period (July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022):**

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### **Data Sourcing:**

The State of Montana used its data management system (Med Compass) to compile the FFY 2021 data. All five regional contractors verified the data using data extracts. The data is from all five programs across the state making it representative of the entire state. The state analyzed the data for a full reporting year. The state data system has worked through a redesign of the IFSP and Care Plan assessments and believes that with contractors using data extracts from Med Compass to validate data, the data is both reliable and valid.

### **Data Analysis:**

Med Compass: The Child Outcomes Summary Analysis Report for July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, was one source of child outcomes summary data. The regional agency's personnel document all baseline and exit Child Outcomes Summary Forms within the Med Compass system. The system converts the numerical ratings to the a-e OSEP reporting categories. Ongoing monitoring and data extracts provide continuous analysis of the data. Data extracts were created for each contractor identifying the infants or toddlers exiting the Program during the time period and those infants and toddlers with both a baseline and exit rating collected in the data management system. Additionally, input addressing the SiMR was gathered via existing virtual meetings from multiple groups such as the ICC and the Part C Leadership Team. Please see Descriptions of Stakeholder input.

### **Contextual Factors:**

The State of Montana recognizes that there is workforce turnover, a workforce shortage, and a need for ongoing professional development. The State of Montana has expanded their Part C Program staff from 1 to 4 individuals in order to address training or professional development needs as well as ensuring training is provided to all new Early Intervention Providers across the state. The State of Montana Part C Program has started to develop a Comprehensive System of Professional Development that will focus on increasing new employees understanding of Early Intervention Services, Evaluation, and how to complete Child Outcome Summaries. With a Comprehensive System of Professional Development, the program can ensure that all providers receive the same initial on-boarding training, which includes training in the

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Child Outcome Summaries. When practitioners or family support specialists don't fully understand the Child Outcome Summary Process, it can impact child outcome ratings, which in turn will impact data quality. The State of Montana has also created an annual training calendar that ensures all agency employees, across the State, receive updated and ongoing training on a yearly basis. As the State Program investigated, it became clear that some regions and agencies were focused on the compliance indicators and did not hold regular trainings around the Child Outcome Summary.

### **Montana's SSIP Evaluation**

The State of Montana has revised the evaluation plan in order to align with the revised improvement strategies and activities. This is also to ensure that the evaluation of implementation and evaluation of outcomes will be manageable as the State of Montana starts to implement the SSIP activities and outcomes. Montana's previous evaluation plan did not address each activity or outcome. In the new evaluation plan, the State has identified key activities and outcomes that will help the State move forward with both their Comprehensive System of Professional Development and Pyramid Model Implementation. These updates include specific timelines and activities that need to be met by those timelines. The State has revised the evaluation plan in order to ensure that they have a plan in place to review and analyze activities and outcomes as the state completes activities and progresses through the SSIP.

The State of Montana has revised the evaluation plan in order to align with the revised improvement strategies and activities. This is also to ensure that the evaluation of implementation and evaluation of outcomes will be manageable as the State of Montana starts to implement the SSIP activities and outcomes. Montana's previous evaluation plan did not address each activity or outcome. The State has revised the evaluation plan in order to ensure that they have a plan in place to review and analyze activities and outcomes as the state completes activities and progresses through the SSIP and to use data to make improvements when needed. The State of Montana also wanted to ensure that they had a solid plan in place that built on itself in order to achieve implementation of Pyramid Model across the State of Montana and to ensure Family Support Specialists and agency staff can access and receive a Comprehensive System of Professional Development.

### **Infrastructure Improvement Progress:**

Comprehensive Personnel Development System- Montana continued to develop our CSPD to lead to primary and comprehensive certification for Family Support Specialist. We contracted with West Ed to develop the 13 knowledge-based content area learning modules identified through the Delphi process, leading to Primary and Comprehensive certification. Content specialists were identified from our regional contractors and participated in piloting the first developed module on, screening, assessment, and evaluation. This work included answering questions presented by WestEd, reviewing content that was recorded by WestEd, and helping with embedded evaluations in the module. Through this review and input process, the State and WestEd were able to modify and improve on the content that will be presented to all new Family Support Specialists and other contractor staff across the State of Montana. The first module has been uploaded to the Learning Management System but is not yet accessible by new Family Support Specialists. In addition, a pre and post quiz has been added to the first module. West Ed and the State Part C Team have worked with the learning management system (New World Now) to ensure that courses will be structured and completed in sequential order. Due to a brief lapse in contract, West Ed had to pause development on the modules but will resume their work in January 2023. The 2023-2024 timeline includes development of 3-5 additional modules, and the State and West Ed continue to work with Montana Early Childhood Practitioner Registry to store the learning modules on the classroom platform. The platform will provide FSS's with the opportunity to track their professional record and the accountability to complete the modules and receive certification.

Social Emotional Screening & Assessment- In FFY2021, Sandy Cade, Part C Coordinator, Samantha Hoggatt, Part C Early Intervention Program Specialist, and Jill Christensen, QRIS Early Education Specialist worked with the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team to develop an Implementation plan and identify cohorts for the 5 regional contractors. The State Leadership Team was able to build a vision and mission statement for the State Team as well as identified group meeting norms. The State Team also worked with TA from ECTA and the University of Denver to outline an implementation plan. In November, the State Team also took a poll to determine who would attend NTI Pyramid Model Conference in April 2023. All members of the State Leadership Team identified that they would like to attend. The State of Montana agreed to pay

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for 17 members to attend and as of January 2023, 8 individuals have been moved from the NTI waitlist to being able to register and attend. Regarding the Implementation Plan, the State Team identified that implementation would stretch over 5 years. The first cohort will start implementation of the Pyramid Model Framework in January 2023. Cohort 1 and the Part C State Team will be attending NTI in April 2023 in Tampa, FL. The MT Part C Team and the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team worked with ECTA TA, Jani Kozlowski and Denver University to provide technical assistance in developing an action plan for statewide implementation of Part C Pyramid Model Framework. After extensive work with ECTA and Jani Kozlowski, the MT Part C Team, as well as Jani agreed that Montana should shift to TA support through NCPMI with Ben Riepe. This TA support with NCPMI will begin in the Spring of 2023. In addition, the MT Part C Team contracted with Rob Corso and NCPMI to develop online Train the Trainer Modules to deliver Pyramid Model Practices e-modules for on demand access and sustainable training. These Train the Trainer e-modules were completed and are set to be placed on the online learning platform in the Spring of 2023.

### **SSIP Short-Term Outcomes Progress**

Comprehensive Professional Development System: Content specialists were identified from our regional contractors and participated in piloting the first developed module on, screening, assessment, and evaluation. The content specialists have been modified based on current employment and position. Piloting work included answering questions presented by WestEd, reviewing content that was recorded by WestEd, and helping with embedded evaluations in the module. Through this review and input process, the State and WestEd were able to modify and improve on the content that will be presented to all new Family Support Specialists and other contractor staff across the State of Montana. The first module has been uploaded to the Learning Management System but is not yet accessible by new Family Support Specialists. In addition, a pre and post quiz has been added to the first module. West Ed and the State Part C Team have worked with the learning management system (New World Now) to ensure that courses will be structured and completed in sequential order. Due to a brief lapse in contract, West Ed had to pause development on the modules but will resume their work in January 2023.



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Strategy #1 Short Term Outcome: The State of Montana currently has a process for new Family Support Specialists to obtain Primary and Comprehensive Certification while the modules and learning platforms are being developed. The current process requires Family Support Specialists to submit a portfolio to the State Part C Staff and present the portfolio to the State staff. During the FFY 2021 reporting period, there were no new submissions for primary certification but there were 5 submissions for comprehensive certification. The 5 presentations were held for Comprehensive Certification in the late Spring to Early Summer of the FFY 2021 reporting period. This outcome was not fully met as not all necessary data was available to determine if the outcome was met.

Social Emotional Screening & Assessment- In FFY2021, Sandy Cade, Part C Coordinator, Samantha Hoggatt, Part C Early Intervention Program Specialist, and Jill Christensen, QRIS Early Education Specialist worked with the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team to develop an Implementation plan and identify cohorts for the 5 regional contractors. Strategy #2 Short Term Outcome #2: The State Leadership Team met six months out of 12 during FFY 2021. This outcome, specifically section 1a was not met as the State Leadership Team did not meet 10 out of 12 months. However, section 1b of this outcome has been completed as the State Leadership Team identified cohorts and an implementation plan. The State Leadership Team was able to build a vision and mission statement for the State Team as well as identified group meeting norms. Three cohorts were identified, and the first cohort starts implementation of pyramid model practices in January 2023. The implementation plan will be completed over five years with on-going support and data collection in order to determine if implementation and infrastructure supports are adequate. Cohort 1 contains 1 regional contract, while cohorts 2 and 3 will include two regional contractors for a total of the five regions. Strategy #2 Intermediate Outcome #1: The MT Part C Team contracted with Rob Corso and NCPMI to develop online Train the Trainer Modules to deliver Pyramid Model Practices e-modules for on demand access and sustainable training. These Train the Trainer e-modules were completed in late 2022 and are set to be placed on the online learning platform in the Spring of 2023. Once on the learning platform, State Part C staff will review the content on the modules. With this review, State staff will ensure content is appropriate for regional contractors, titles will be given to each module, and a sequential flow will be determined on the learning platform. This Intermediate outcome has not yet been completed as the learning modules have been placed on the Learning Management System but are not available to the regional staff as the Part C Team still needs to review and provide feedback to the developers.

**Infrastructure Improvement Outlook:**

Comprehensive Professional Development System: During the FFY 2022 reporting period, West Ed and the State of Montana Part C Team will continue to meet and develop 3-5 more modules. After each module is created, subject matter experts will review each module, provide input on content, and ensure pre and post test questions are fair. After input and review, modules will be uploaded to the Learning Management system (New World Now) in sequential order. Module development will likely continue into the FFY 2023 reporting period before they are completed to their entirety. While modules are developed and the Learning Management System created, Family Support Specialists will continue to submit portfolios to the State Part C Staff in order to gain primary, comprehensive, and recertification. The State Part C Team also plans to continue to work with their fiscal department on ways to provide payment incentives for comprehensive certification. Through these activities, the State of Montana will be working to complete and provide data on Strategy #1 Short Term Outcome: Certification: FSSs will receive primary certification within the first 2 years. Existing FSSs develop portfolios around the DEC RPs in order to apply for comprehensive certification; and Strategy #1 Intermediate Outcome: Infrastructure: FSS's are using learning platform to access learning modules and receive incentives.

Social Emotional Screening & Assessment: In November, the State Pyramid Model Team took a poll to determine who would attend NTI Pyramid Model Conference in April 2023. All members of the State Leadership Team identified that they would like to attend. The State of Montana agreed to pay for 17 members to attend and as of January 2023, 8 individuals have been moved from the NTI waitlist to being able to register and attend. These individuals included the identified cohort 1. By attending NTI or the Pyramid Model Conference, the State of Montana's cohort 1 will gain information on the EIPPF tool used for fidelity and coaching, the Early Intervention Benchmarks of Quality, and general Pyramid Model Practices. The Cohort 1 individuals also signed up for additional training in Practice Based Coaching in order to shift from the Shelden and Rush coaching model to Practice Based Coaching. State, regional, and local leadership teams will use the Benchmarks of Quality to assess infrastructure development and support, Coaches and Family Support Specialist will use the Early Intervention Pyramid Model Practices Fidelity Instrument to assess intervention practices fidelity in the home with the family. EIPPF Practices are aligned with the relevant Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices (2014) and Principles of Early Intervention<sup>2</sup>. The EIPPF tools use will be initiated in the coming years (2024 or 2025) as the first

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cohort started implementation and will receive training on the tool in 2023. The other two cohorts will start implementation in 2024 and 2025. Through these activities, the State of Montana will be working to complete and provide data on Strategy #2 Short Term Outcome: EI Practitioners attend 2-day Pyramid Model Training, Fidelity, and measurement tool training, and training on tools such as the ASQ-SE and DEC RPs; Strategy #2 Short Term Outcome: Infrastructure supports including the State Leadership Team, Cohorts, and coaches are in place and functioning across the State of MT; Strategy #2 Intermediate Outcome: Modules are placed on Montana's ECP learning classroom platform and practitioners are gaining knowledge from the modules; and Strategy #2 Intermediate Outcome: Training: Coaches train and coach to the DEC Recommended Practices.

### **Evidence-Based Practice Implementation:**

**Pyramid Model Framework:** Pyramid Model Framework consists of Family Support Specialist implementing practices in homes with families to build their capacity to support their child's social emotional development, in turn, this practice will impact Montana's SiMR; increase the percentage of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved positive social and emotional skills including positive relationships by the time they turn three or exit the program.

**Pyramid Model Practice:** Within the implementation of establishing the Pyramid Model Framework, Montana will implement the use of Pyramid Model practices to promote the social and emotional outcomes of all children, promote the skill development of children with social, emotional, and behavioral delays to prevent the need for more intensive supports; and intervene effectively when children have persistent challenging behavior. Family Support Specialist will implement the pyramid model practices with fidelity in the home to build the families capacity so that families can enhance their child's social emotional development. Because families' needs are dynamic, practices are changed to accommodate all levels of support, FSS will build collaborative partnerships with all families, use family coaching strategies to meet the needs of caregivers, provide families with knowledge and skills related to responsive and nurturing relationships, build families confidence and competence in supporting their child's social emotional development and provide families with tools and strategies that address and focus on the prevention of challenging behavior. Montana is confident that by building the capacity of families to promote their child's social emotional development will impact our SiMR and increase the percentage of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved positive social and emotional skills including positive relationships by the time they turn three or exit the program.

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Practice Based Coaching: The use of Practice Based Coaching promotes the Family Support Specialist effective use of Pyramid Model Practices in

their work with families, and additionally, PBC framework and essential coaching components support implementation of FSS practices as intended.

Pyramid Model in Part C promotes the following:

- Support for the early interventionist
- Early Interventionist build families capacity
- Families enhance children's social emotional development

By implementing the PBC model to build the fidelity and quality of the FSS to implement effective practice, we expect to generate improved child

outcomes in social emotional development impacting Montana's SiMR, which is to increase the percentage of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who

demonstrate improved positive social and emotional skills including positive relationships by the time they turn three or exit the program, as it has been effective in improving FSS's practice to coach the family's and build capacity to support their child's social emotional development. Reflective Practice: Montana intends to use reflective practice to engage in the process for continuous improvement to reflect on actions, determine the effectiveness of actions (practice) develop a plan, consider immediate & future situations. Since reflective practice consist of FSS working with the families to develop strategies that can be used to support their child's development, this practice is intended to have a positive impact on Montana's SiMR by increase the percentage of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved positive social and emotional skills including positive relationships by the time they turn three or exit the program.

### **Justification for Evidence-Based Outlook:**

In our FFY 2020 APR, the State of MT Part C Team noted that "feedback was given that the current EBP Routines Based Interviewing and Sheldon & Rush Coaching in Early Childhood proved cumbersome to administrate, especially virtually, and that it was observed that Family Support Specialist provided questions in a rote manner and therefore not engaging with families as intended. The SE Leadership team held discussion and made the decision to continue with the current EBP and begin implementation of the Pyramid Model Framework to further support FSS's practice and build capacity in

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families to enhance their child’s social emotional development.” As Cohort 1 starts to implement the Pyramid Model Framework, they have noted that they will be discontinuing the use of Shelden and Rush and moving towards the Practice Based Coaching Model. With this change, the State of MT Part C Team will be working with the other two cohorts to face out Shelden and Rush and move towards the Practice Based Coaching Model.

### **Monitoring of Practice Fidelity:**

In measuring practitioner’s implementation of practices based on the trainings in the CSPD, Family Support Specialists (FSSs) will start by completing a pre-self-assessment to measure their content knowledge and a post self-assessment to measure content knowledge after completion of each module. This pre-post measure will reflect evidence of content knowledge gain based on completing the learning module. This gain in content knowledge is an essential precursor for FSSs to be able to implement the practices embedded in the modules. Self-assessment data will be shared with the FSS’s coach and or mentor and used to inform their coaching plan to support practitioners in implementing the practices with fidelity. Additionally, coaches will use tools such as the related DEC Recommended Practice improvement tools to help practitioners implement evidence-based practices and related checklist to help improve skills and inform coaching plan goals and thus supporting practice change with the FSS’s. We expect to begin collecting pre- post self-assessment data in 2025 after the modules have been completed by WestEd and uploaded to the learning platform.

Statewide Implementation of the Pyramid Model Framework includes a variety of measurement tools to collect data and monitor the fidelity of infrastructure to support practices. The use of data-based decision making is key in implementation, with measures and evaluation procedures to help determine fidelity of implementation and fidelity of intervention practice. These tools include the Early Intervention Pyramid Model Practices Fidelity Instrument and the Benchmarks of Quality. Montana will use Ages & Stages as a screener to measure social emotional development which will drive social emotional outcomes and in turn Pyramid Model practices. As Implementation advances, data collection will be examined for alignment in the need for measuring fidelity of implementation and child and family outcomes.

### **Next Steps for Evidence-Based Implementation:**

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Montana's selected evidence-based practices support an infant or toddlers social and emotional development recognizing the infants or toddlers needs and family's capacity to support these needs. Each practice identifies the key component of social emotional development in infants and toddlers, positive relationships with caregivers and support development in the context of the family. The practices impact the social emotional development of infants and toddlers with disabilities by strengthening the capacity of families to support their child's social and emotional development.

As Montana begins to work towards establishing the Pyramid Model Framework, we will be working primarily on infrastructure; continuing module development for CSPD, putting in to place coaching and reflective supervision supports to build infrastructure, and continuing to roll out and implement the Pyramid Model implementation road map with the three identified cohorts. Next steps include annual training on the DEC Recommended Practices as well as Pyramid Model Practices and Implementation, continued development of the CSPD learning modules with West Ed, and ensuring access to the Train the Trainer Part C Pyramid Model E-Modules on the Early Childhood Practitioner Learning platform in order to train new staff. In addition, Montana will continue to embed adult learning principles and the DEC Recommended Practices in CSPD learning module development, self-assessment tools will be used to measure content knowledge growth pre and post learning module completion. Coaches will use the self-assessment data and the DEC Recommended Practice checklist to inform the development of goals and identify coaching strategies to support FSS to understand and improve practice, plan intervention and self-evaluate their use of evidence-based practices.

### **Stakeholder Input**

Input addressing all indicators was gathered via existing virtual meetings held at least monthly from multiple groups: the Interagency Coordinating Council, the Family Support Services Advisory Council (FSSAC) as well as the Part C Leadership Team (core working group), subgroups from the Leadership Team (work groups), and the administrative advisory team made up of the Part C Coordinator, Part C Program Specialist, and the Unit's managers. To specifically engage parent members as well as early intervention service providers, agency representatives, higher education representatives, agency directors and Family Support Specialists/Service Coordinators in target setting, data analysis, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress, the following actions were taken virtual meetings beginning April 8, 2022, through January 27, 2023, with the FSSAC, Part C Leadership Team, administrative team; Part C state team meeting; specific

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Indicator data analysis meetings: target setting survey distributed to all groups; and the dissemination of the survey results and rationale for proposed baseline and target decisions to the various stakeholder groups. Subsequent Target Setting Survey results are available on the Montana Milestones website at

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/ChildCare/montanamilestones/partcreports>

### **Stakeholder Engagement Strategies:**

The State of Montana Part C Team expanded in FFY 21 and into FFY 22 from two staff members to four. With this expansion, roles were created to focus solely on Professional Development and Quality, Policy and Procedure, Data Management, and the Part C Coordinator. From these roles, workgroups with the regional contractor's family support specialists, directors, supervisors and other staff were established and focus on quality and professional development topics and a Hybrid Approach workgroup. These workgroups allow for regional contractors to discuss potential training opportunities, barriers to families and children, and brainstorm possible solutions.

In addition, the Part C team has worked with FSSAC stakeholders and parent centers to create two workgroups focusing on developing content for parents to better understand Part C process and procedure and to ensure parents have a voice in connecting Part C to therapist, pediatricians, and other service providers. Parents or family members continue to contribute to the FSSAC's Strategic Plan and engage as part of the two work groups targeting increasing engagement and collaboration of multidisciplinary evaluation teams, an acronym dictionary, and transition at age 3. The Part C state team collaborated with and sought stakeholder input regarding setting new indicator targets and resetting baselines for some APR indicators. Stakeholders involved in this process included the state level team, statewide supervisors/specialists, statewide service coordinator and direct services staff/contractors, Montana Empowerment Center, and the FSSAC which has 4 parent members. To help prepare stakeholders to make informed decisions, the Part C Team shares an SPP/APR PowerPoint presentation annually to the FSSAC Stakeholder group in which is reviewed, discussed, questions are answered, and feedback is solicited regarding Montana's SPP/APR indicator data. The data shared includes current targets and actual data, as well as the targets and actual data for prior years. To further increase stakeholder capacity and engagement, in the coming year Montana plans to also incorporate training to parents around the Part C Indicators in conjunction with the Montana Empowerment Center.

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In FFY 2022, the Part C State team will begin conversations with the FSSAC and workgroups around how the State of Montana can increase outreach to underserved populations. The purpose of this outreach is to ensure that Montana is reaching underserved populations and to educate a more diverse population of Montana families, leading to enrollment in services and an improvement in outcomes for children and their families. Additionally, the State of Montana has started to investigate modes of outreach including social media, television advertisements, and articles in tribal population magazines and newspapers.

#### **Parent Engagement:**

The Part C Team, stakeholders, and parents created brochures on the process of transitioning from Part C services to Part B services. Parents led the discussion and explained how they felt throughout the process, pieces they didn't understand, and areas that needed to be included in the brochures. Prior to the creation of the brochures, the workgroup, including parents, reviewed documents around transition published by Montana's Office of Public Instruction, a transition toolkit created by Montana's Part C Team, and other resources from Technical Assistance providers around transition. After review of the resources and getting parents input around their experience with transitions, the workgroup created two brochures that would assist families across the State through the transition process. The brochures were published and sent to the Montana Empowerment Center for mass distribution to all individuals on the mailing list. The brochures are housed on the MT Milestones website and the Montana Empowerment Center Website. The brochures were developed for families to have at the transition meeting and include essential questions that parents might want to ask in order to fully engage in the meeting.

The social emotional leadership team (Pyramid Model State Leadership Team) comprised of regional representatives from all five contractors met quarterly in 2021-22 to guide the direction of the implementation of the Pyramid Model framework. This team now meets monthly as a Pyramid Model Leadership Team with ECTA technical assistance specialist Jani Kozlowski and Denver University Pyramid Model technical assistance, Alissa Rausch and Benjamin Riepe. Going forward, the Technical Assistance will be provided by NCPMI and Ben Riepe.



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Regional Contractors Family Support Specialist contributed as content specialist to review and pilot CSPD modules as they are developed.

Montana's Family Support Coordinating Council (FSSAC) was also used to seek broad stakeholder input regarding Montana's SiMR and ongoing SSIP improvement strategies. Quarterly meetings with the FSSAC were held on: 1/14/22, 4/8/22, 6/17/22, 9/23/22, and 1/27/23. During these meetings, information and data about the progress being made toward the SSIP outcomes was shared to help make data-driven decisions about the SSIP activities, particularly those related to professional development and Child outcomes in social emotional development. FSSAC were convened on 1/27/23 to seek broad stakeholder input with the revision of baseline and target setting and, in addition, analyze the SSIP data. During the meeting on 1/27/23, the FSSAC members provided their input via an electronic survey through Microsoft Forms on the revision of baseline data and targets. During the FSSAC meeting on 1/27/23, review of the Annual Report data, identified targets and the progress of the SSIP was shared for any additional feedback.

Broad Stakeholder Input: Input addressing all indicators was gathered via existing virtual meetings held at least monthly from multiple groups: the Interagency Coordinating Council, the Family Support Services Advisory Council (FSSAC) as well as the Part C Leadership Team (core working group), subgroups from the Leadership Team (work groups), and the administrative advisory team made up of the Part C Coordinator, Part C Program Specialist, and the Unit's managers.

### Determination Results: Annual Performance Report for FFY 2021

- When making an annual determination the following factors must be considered:
  - (1) performance on compliance indicators;
  - (2) valid and reliable data;

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(3) correction of identified noncompliance; and

(4) other data available to the State about the LEA or EIS program's compliance with IDEA, including any relevant audit findings.

- States must use the same four determination categories that OSEP is required to use with States:

Meets Requirements

Needs Assistance

Needs Intervention

Needs Substantial Intervention

- In alignment with 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.603(b) and 303.703(b) the regional provider Early Childhood Intervention's Annual Performance Report determination status for FFY 2021 is "**Needs Assistance.**"