

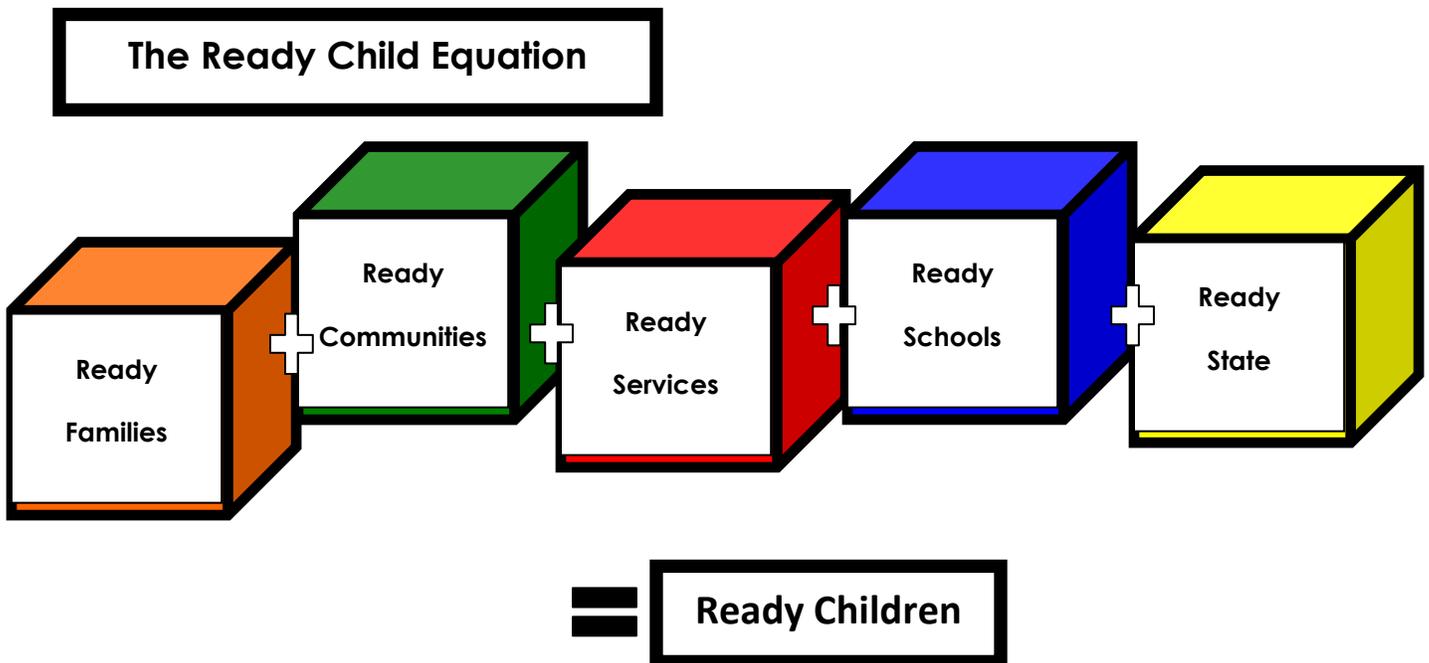
Early Childhood Coalition

Strategic Plan 2013-2018

Mission: With the focus on the whole child, we promote community collaboration to network resources and streamline services in support of the health, safety, care and education for children ages 0-8 and their families in the greater Helena area.

Vision: Safe, stable, nurturing relationships lead to resilient children, strong families, and stable communities.

Tag Line: The Early Childhood Coalition (ECC) of the Greater Helena Area: Every child can be ready to thrive.



Early Childhood Coalition Functions:

1. To network within Coalition membership
2. To raise community awareness of Early Childhood
 - a. Linking families
 - b. Marketing
3. To streamline services by reducing barriers
4. To identify existing resource and services to determine gaps, overlap, and utilization.
5. To advocate for children 0-8 and their families.

Early Childhood Coalition (ECC) 2013-2018 Goals, Objectives and Strategies

GOAL 1: SUSTAIN AND IMPROVE A COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM FOR THE GREATER HELENA AREA.

Objective 1: Develop and maintain an annual budget in connection with the United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area and raise funds for early childhood coalition operations.

Measures: An annual budget is developed, and funds and in-kind resources are secured each year.

Strategy 1: The Leadership Team develops an annual budget and approach for funding and will submit this document to the United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area for consideration.

Strategy 2: Maintain the equivalency of 0.5 FTE ECC coordinator.

Strategy 3: Identify and pursue long-term marketing funding.

Strategy 4: Pursue funding through combination of ECC member contributions, grants and in-kind donations.

Strategy 5: Track and evaluate success annually.

Objective 2: Maintain ECC operations.

Measures: Charter is developed and completed.

Strategy 1: Write an organizational charter reflecting a new structure and a new relationship with the United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area.

Objective 3: Develop, recruit, and expand ECC collaboration through its membership.

Measures: Track the number of participants in ECC, those actively engaged, and additional members to ECC in areas that are identified as needed (e.g. medical professionals, business leaders).

Strategy 1: Define what a member is.

Strategy 2: Define what an “actively engaged” member is.

Strategy 3: Develop a retention plan and ways to honor those who are engaged.

Strategy 4: Use work plans and ECC meeting time to effectively engage members.

Strategy 5: Enter into memorandums of understanding with member agencies to support and engage with the ECC and its activities.

Strategy 6: Write a letter of commitment acknowledging interaction with and obligation to individual participants.

Strategy 7: Develop recruitment plan to engage and retain medical, mental health, business, schools, justice, and other underrepresented community sectors in ECC.

Objective 4: Promote and support collaborative training and professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals and caregivers.

Measures: Track training needs that are discussed and identified. Track the number of cross-trainings held and those who participated.

Strategy 1: Use ECC as a means of communicating, networking, and promoting training across organizations.

Strategy 2: Identify gaps in professional training available and work together to find trainers and funding to fill those gaps.

Strategy 3: Develop a mechanism to advertise and track trainings, cross-trainings, and participants.

GOAL 2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT MESSAGING AND MARKETING TO PROMOTE A FOCUS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD.

Objective 1: Develop and implement clear and consistent community wide messages on the importance of early childhood.

Measures: To be determined.

Strategy 1: Develop a user-friendly early childhood and ECC “brand” and message that will highlight issues critical to healthy early childhood development.

Strategy 2: Evaluate targeted marketing.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE FUNDING AND POLICY INVESTMENTS THAT SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN.

Objective 1: Research, identify, pursue, and secure funding for the early childhood coalition its work.

Measures: Track contacts, opportunities identified, and funds and in-kind support secured.

Strategy 1: Pursue funding and capacity building opportunities.

Strategy 2: Support public safety initiative (2015).

Objective 2: Advocate for public policies and funding that support high quality early childhood infrastructure and services.

Measures: Track contacts, bills and rules supported, funds allocated, and policies improved.

Strategy 1: Develop and implement a plan for advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels.

Strategy 2: Seek technical assistance for advocacy and policy making.

Strategy 3: Work cooperatively with other early childhood advocates around the state.

GOAL 4: INCREASE AWARENESS, ACCESS AND USE OF SCREENING, PREVENTION, AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.

Objective 1: Increase caregiver access to services, starting prenatally.

Measures: Track data on the number of screenings and events held, participants, and referrals to appropriate services.

Strategy 1: Host collaborative conversations about existing services, improving accessibility of services, and addressing gaps and barriers to services.

Strategy 2: Determine feasibility of mobile health and screening services. If feasible, develop and implement a plan to add mobile health and development screening services for the community.

Strategy 3: Use community events and resources as an opportunity to increase caregiver knowledge of services and how to access them.

Strategy 4: Promote more opportunities for caregivers to access high quality parenting classes and materials, starting prenatally.

Strategy 5: Maintain a virtual resource center.

GOAL 5: IMPROVE THE UNDERSTANDING OF AND SUPPORT FOR HIGH QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN ZERO TO EIGHT.

Objective 1: Promote high quality early care and education.

Measures: Track collaborative agreements, MOUs, transition protocols, participation in Consented Referral System, and other concrete documentation of collaborative efforts. Track messaging and marketing efforts that promote high quality child care and early education.

Strategy 1: Use ECC networking resources for communication about high quality care and education.

Strategy 2: Promote and support collaboration between schools, parents, preschool, child care, and other early childhood services.

Strategy 3: Support efforts to encourage quality, licensed child care through local, state, and federal level programs (e.g. STARS to Quality for child care).

Strategy 4: Collaborate to identify and address gaps in access to sufficient, high quality, affordable early care and education.

Work Plans and Annual Review Process

Work Plan:

Each ECC committee and the Leadership Team will create an annual work plan to guide their work, and to clearly communicate to the rest of the ECC and the community where priorities are. The work plan is also a tool for accountability, since the activity level is how ECC moves towards its goals.

Each committee will come up with a work plan, taking into account the following:

- 1) Priority goals and objectives identified in an annual review process.
- 2) The capacity of the committee to address those priorities
- 3) Ensuring that progress can be measured in a fairly straightforward way

Each committee, coordinator and Leadership Team is responsible for their own activities, but continues communication and partnership is essential to success. The Leadership Team and coordinator are also responsible for ensuring that the individual committee plans work together and that all functions of the collaboration are addressed.

Activities for the Leadership Team, committees, and coordinators are each listed in the work plan, with information on:

- Leadership Team, Committee Name, or Coordinator
- Members or Coordinator
- Work Plan Year

Each part of the work plan has the following components:

- Goals and objectives that these activities fulfill
- Activities for this committee
- Time frame for each activity
- Responsible Parties
- Measures of Success
- Targets
- Current status of activities, updated regularly (not started, ongoing, specific date, completed)

Each committee will be responsible for keeping on track, measuring success, and reporting back to the entire ECC.

In addition, the Leadership Team and the coordinator will work together to create a coordinator work plan, using a similar format.

It is suggested that each committee report on progress, measures and challenges at each full ECC meeting.

These work plans comprise the work of the ECC. The ECC work plan, in its entirety, will be available to all members of the ECC.

Annual Review of Strategic and Work Plans

ECC members will review both work plan progress and the strategic plan each year.

First, each committee and the Leadership Team will be responsible for providing the following:

- A summary of the activities completed.
- A synopsis of measures of success and changes in the community from these activities.
- A brief assessment of what went well and what was difficult
- What was learned and suggestions for new activities for next year

It is recommended that ECC devotes one of its full meetings to a discussion of what happened in the last year, as well as suggestions for new activities for the following year.

Taking into account this information, the Leadership Team shall:

- Identify areas where the group has accomplished a lot and areas that are in need of additional focus in order to work toward ECC's goals and objectives.
- Use the measures of success to evaluate progress
- Evaluate whether any strategies in the strategic plan need changing. In rare cases, changes or additions to the objectives may be needed, based on progress and learning accomplished.
- Make appropriate changes to the strategic plan.
- Identify areas and activities that would be useful for committees to pursue, and give that information back to committees in order to formulate a new work plan.

A brief "State of ECC" will be written by the coordinator each year, to highlight accomplishments, show measures of success, and highlight priority areas for the coming year. This will be available to all ECC members.

ECC Decision-Making Filter for Project Opportunities

The ECC may, from time to time, have opportunities or projects that come up for consideration at times other than during a yearly review process. When possible, the ECC will:

- 1) Propose a new idea, project or opportunity. These proposals can come from the committee level, in the general ECC meetings, the coordinators, or from the Leadership Team.
- 2) All proposals must then go to the Leadership Team for a decision as to whether to add the idea to the ECC's work.
- 3) The Leadership Team may delegate decision-making to the coordinator(s) or executive committee, if time is limited.

The Leadership Team will use the following filtering questions and criteria to determine if the project or opportunity is something ECC should take on.

- 1) **What goal(s) and objective(s) would this opportunity help meet?** (If it does not help meet a goal or objective, then the project is tabled. Modifying objectives may be considered at annual reviews.)
- 2) **What is the measure to evaluate whether this is successful?** How will we know whether this project would help us meet one or more goals and objectives?
- 3) **Do we have the capacity (time, people, money, skills)?** If not, but this is the best use of our time, is there something else we should be doing first?
- 4) **Is this the best use of our current resources?** Are there other options we should be considering?

The Leadership Team can:

- 1) Decide immediately if the project is simple enough, the outcomes are well-understood, and current capacity exists; or
- 2) Determine what kind of questions must be answered to decide and set a deadline for getting those answered, and then make a determination.

Any project that is adopted must have a strategy or strategies give an overview of how the project will be accomplished. A matrix of the project will be developed as follows:

Project X meets the following goals, objectives, and strategies:

Then, for each project, add in to the appropriate committee and/or coordinator portion of the work plan.

The Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring this project is integrated into the appropriate committee activities and completed.