

History and Purpose of Flathead County's early childhood coalition



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About Flathead Best Beginnings

- ▶ Local Early Childhood Coalition
- ▶ One of 20+ around the state
- ▶ Covering from prenatal stage to the age of 8
- ▶ Purpose: Building a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system to meet the needs of young children and their families in our community.
- ▶ Focused on communication, coordination and collaboration to improve outcomes for children and families
- ▶ FlatheadBestBeginnings.org



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Statewide linkages

- ▶ 20+ statewide coalitions (pre-2020)
- ▶ Best Beginnings Advisory Council - advising State Dept. of Public Health and Human Services
- ▶ Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies
- ▶ Training providers (ChildWise, etc.)

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History 2011-2013

- ▶ DPHHS/Gov. Schweitzer initiated
- ▶ Branding “Best Beginnings”/ Scholarship overlap
- ▶ Funded collaboratives around school transition and home visiting
- ▶ Infrastructure Development
- ▶ Coordinator
- ▶ Needs Assessment
 - ▶ Parent focus groups
 - ▶ Surveys at the fair
- ▶ Strategic Plan
- ▶ Executive Council

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History 2013-2015

- ▶ Sustainability through membership
- ▶ Continued state connection/ funding
- ▶ Focused on relationships, shared learning about community issues and professional development
- ▶ Communication infrastructure - website, e-news
- ▶ Support/develop home visiting

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History 2015-2017

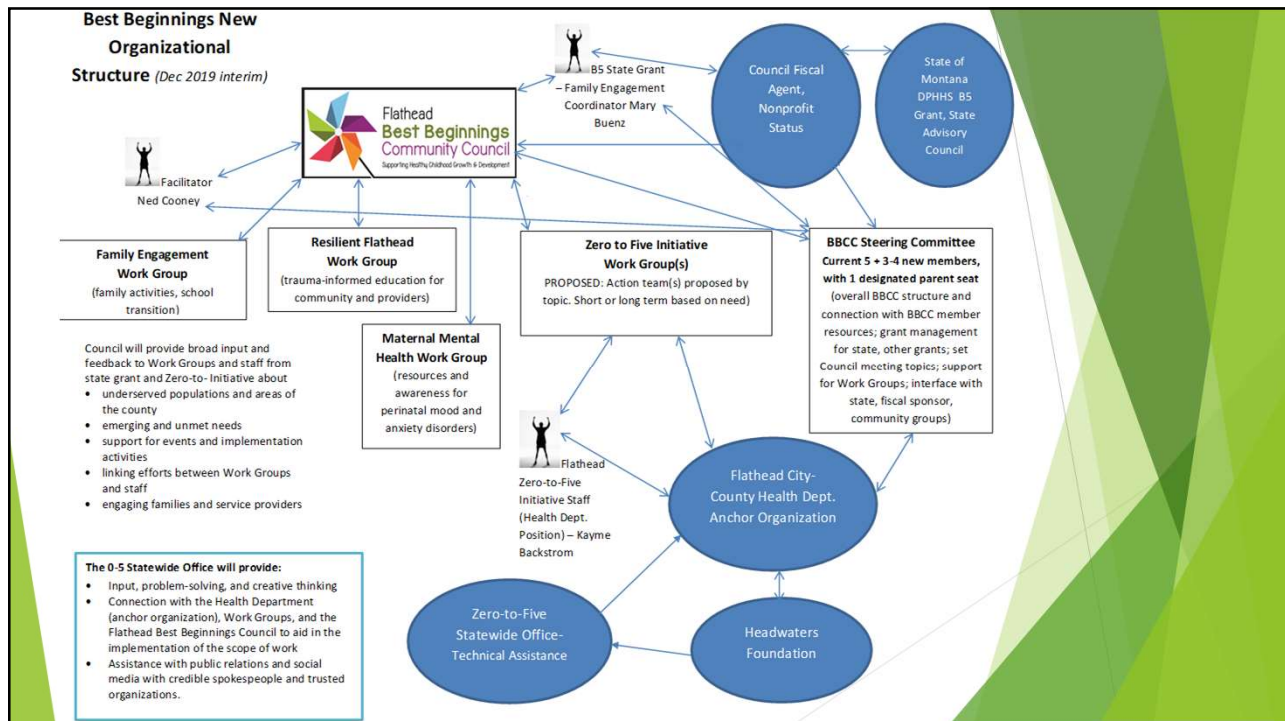
- ▶ Preschool development grant support
- ▶ Early Edge state-funded preschool - conversation with schools in preparation
- ▶ Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilient Flathead
- ▶ Cross-connections - SOARS, Northwest MT Cooperative
- ▶ Early Childhood Champions

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History 2018-2019

- ▶ Headwaters Foundation/ Zero to Five governance and implementation discussion
- ▶ Family Engagement Work Group
 - ▶ Plates and Play
 - ▶ School transition work
- ▶ Resilient Flathead Now What/Recharge
- ▶ State funding - Birth to 5 (B5)
 - ▶ Increased Parent/ Family Engagement at Play Groups, Council
- ▶ Maternal Mental Health Coalition linkage

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2020...

- ▶ Bright by Text
- ▶ Then....a pandemic happened...
- ▶ Maintain connection and mutual support
- ▶ Information sharing (faster than normal)
- ▶ Child care/out-of-school time advocacy

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What's Next?

Steering Committee planning Nov/Dec.

- ▶ Determine planning process for strategic planning update
- ▶ Incorporate 3Rs
- ▶ Simplify
- ▶ Project focus

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