



Early Childhood Action Plan Summit Committee Guide

Materials compiled from the 7 ECAP Committees for the July 22nd 2019 ECAP Summit

Result #1: All children have a healthy start

Early Childhood Wellness Committee

To facilitate optimal health, development and well-being of all Vermont's children, the Early Childhood Wellness Committee works to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive system of quality improvement opportunities. The committee meets the 3rd Wednesday from 2-4pm at Building Bright Futures office in Williston.

Chair: Lauren Smith, Help Me Grow Director with the Vermont Department of Health, Lauren.smith@vermont.gov.

Result 1 Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Continue to implement Help Me Grow across the state. Data show the age 'at-time of referral to early intervention' went from 26 months to 14 months in 2018
- B. Successful integration of home visiting models into one, with new branding 'Strong Families'
- C. Expansion of DULCE program 4 regions. This program supports young families through a creative partnership between community and medical providers
- D. Launch of UVM Medical School's Early Learning Integration Project placing Medical Residents in early care and learning programs
- E. Commitment to use of Early MTSS among school and early care and education programs across the state
- F. Greater business support for family-friendly policies and legislative support for Family Leave and Minimum Wage legislation
- G. Physicians' adoption of screening for Social Determinants of Health, especially asking families about food security and housing security to better serve families and connect them with services when in need.

Priorities for 2019-2020

- A. Exploration of gaps in access and the existing solutions such as telemedicine to promote access to services even with geographic or other barriers
- B. Cultivate shared priority in developmental monitoring and screening. Support collaboration between Help Me Grow, Building Bright Futures and Maternal Child Health regional coordinators to improve the Universal Developmental Screening registry
- C. Promote Strong Families program and advocate for solutions to the identified needs
- D. Continue to invest in maternal depression and social determinants screening efforts in medical and early care settings. Amplify the learning from special funded projects

across the state about screening for maternal depression, food and housing security, etc.

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 1:

Align strategies with State Health Improvement Plan strategy to Optimize Child Development and health care reform priorities such as, 'Invest in systems that support families as children's primary caregivers in places where families are: at home, through primary care medical homes and in early care and learning environments.'

Recognize the opportunity to incorporate social determinants of health screening and promotion of protective factors including building resiliency in Vermont's families.

ECAP Summit Stakeholder Discussion Questions

1. How does your work relate to the ECWC priorities? What do you have to contribute?
2. The committee is seeking to revive membership and expand to represent broader stakeholders (ie: maternal depression, domestic violence advocates, CIS, housing, transportation, those working with a trauma/resilience lens, Accountable Care Organization.) Do you have suggestions for representation?

Result #2: Families and communities play a leading role in children's well-being

Families and Communities Committee

The BBF Families and Communities Committee works to develop a statewide approach that enriches and expands *family leadership* at the provider, agency, and community level by convening a statewide Family Leadership Team to provide thought leadership for family leadership best practices. The committee meets via video conference the first Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm.

Co-Chairs: Shannon Hottinger, Parent, shannonhottinger@gmail.com and Renee Swain, VT Head Start Collaboration Office Director, Child Development Division, Renee.Swain@vermont.gov.

Result #2 Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Launch of committee and recruit members including parents and community partners who are invested in parent and community engagement. Committee co-chairs include a parent and public early childhood leader.
- B. Development of plan funded through PDG grant to conduct a parent engagement assessment
- C. Investigation of parent engagement models used by Head Start and Center for the Study of Social Policy to help inform Vermont's parent engagement assessment project

Priorities for 2019-2020

- A. Continue to develop committee membership seeking to be composed of at least 51% families, no more than 50% of people paid in the field
- B. Recruit parent and community leaders across Vermont and conduct a Family Engagement assessment to inform regional and state-wide family engagement strategy. This is a project funded by the PDG grant.
- C. Develop a strategy to increase parent leadership in the state where parents both inform the system, and the system informs parents.
- D. Strengthen connection to other family engagement work, particularly Children's Integrated Services and Strengthening Families.

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 2

Ensure the need for parent voice and *Vermont Guiding Principles – Each and Every Child and Family* is reflected across the ECAP, not isolated in result 2.

Change language from a 'for-parent' perspective toward language that facilitates parents' ability to have agency in decisions about their families and children. For example, move from 'develop and implement intentional, evidence-based parent education and support opportunities' to 'create opportunities for parents to educate and inform the system.'

ECAP Summit stakeholder discussion questions

1. How do we create and move forward a system of robust family leadership?
2. How do families want to be involved in the system and express leadership?

Result #3: All children and families have access to high-quality opportunities that meet their needs

Early Learning and Development Committee (shared oversight with PPD committee, see next page)

The Early Learning and Development committee is devoted to increase the number of childcare providers and the number of children and families that can be served across the state. They also work to strengthen the quality of early childhood services throughout the early childhood system through a focus on alignment and best practices. The committee is composed of early care and learning program directors and stakeholders at different levels of policy and systems integration. The committee utilizes subcommittees to execute its strategies including: Workforce Development and Recruitment, Policy-Support for ECE Workforce Education Costs, ECAP Update, Marketing for New Child Care Entrepreneurs, and Family Needs and Preferences Study ("Demand" study). The committee meets the 2nd Thursday of the month from 10:00am-12:00pm at Building Bright Futures office in Williston with a video conference option.

Co-Chairs: Janet McLaughlin, janet@letsgrowkids.org, Chief Operating Officer at Let's Grow Kids and Christel Michaud, Director of Child Care Licensing at the Child Development Division, Christel.Michaud@vermont.gov

Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Completed a Landscape Analysis of Vermont Secondary Education relative to Early Childhood Education to help inform strategy for workforce recruitment plan
- B. Successfully executed ECAP and legislative process to garner public investment in workforce education costs. Much greater legislative support and understanding of issues even if the entire request was not fulfilled this year.
- C. Maintained a robust committee and subcommittee structure engaging many people, leveraging their expertise to get work done. Also accessed ECAP Data and Evaluation committee using data to inform strategy and decision making.
- D. Supported development and execution of multiple projects (Demand Study, marketing materials) serving an important monitoring role.

Priorities for 2019-2020

- A. Advise on continued need to invest in high quality workforce through investment in education and increase in compensation and benefits
- B. Support for "ECE as a Profession"
- C. Use Landscape Analysis of Vermont Secondary Education to design outreach strategy, new partnerships, career advising tools, programs and marketing materials to recruit young people into the workforce
- D. Utilization of Demand study data to continue to inform trends and family needs around childcare
- E. Provide vision and guidance on the benefits of Universal Pre-k and need to maintain a mixed delivery system of early care and learning
- F. Strengthen the quality of early childhood services throughout the early childhood system through a focus on alignment and best practices

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 3

Be specific about the need to improve access, quality and capacity of early care and learning programs. Move from the original language that states '*high-quality services and programs*'; to new language, 'expand access to high-quality early care and learning programs for each and every family with young children.' The committee also has clarified strategies to build capacity and other strategies around quality.

Bring all strategies regarding training and workforce development under this result (some relocated from Result 6.) Language now includes, 'implement policies and structures that enhance the economic stability and security of the early childhood workforce.'

ECAP Summit stakeholder discussion questions

1. What areas for intersection between the ELD priorities and other BBF committees and regional councils? What can we leverage?
2. Given the 2019 legislative session accomplishments, what's next?
3. How to build upon ELD's existing priorities?

Result #3: All children and families have access to high-quality opportunities that meet their needs

Strategy: *Equip the early childhood workforce across sectors in the early childhood system with the common knowledge and skills needed to support children’s optimal learning and development and family stability.*

Committee: Professional Preparation and Development

The PPD committee seeks to develop, coordinate, and promote a comprehensive system of quality learning opportunities for current and prospective early childhood and after school professionals. The committee builds on assets and prioritizes needs for professional opportunities with a focus on educators, though are expanding to include needs of CIS professionals and others working with children and families. The PPD facilitates communication about professional development to consumers, practitioners and the general public. The PPD meets monthly alternating between Rutland and Montpelier CCV sites with a video conference option.

More information is at: <https://northernlightsccv.org/resources/vermonts-ecpd-system/ppd/>
Co-Chairs: Becky Millard, Director Northern Lights at CCV, becky.millard@ccv.edu and Lynne Robbins, Early Childhood and Afterschool Systems Specialist, Child Development Division, Lynne.Robbins@vermont.gov

Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Completed two sets of recommendations for potential improvements to the early childhood career ladder and the program director credential.
- B. Created a process for determining priorities for professional development offerings and implemented that process to create a list of priorities for 2019-2020
- C. Developed strategies to help market the work of Northern Lights at CCV following systems change
- D. Partnering with the Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium on developing the Early Educators Institute at Castleton

Priorities for 2019-2020

- A. Complete an evaluation of the early childhood professional development system and create a plan to implement recommended changes
- B. Continue work on modifications to the early childhood career ladder and program director credential
- C. Complete a cross-walk of the career ladder and program director recommendations with the recommendations of NAEYC Power to the Profession and BBF Think Tank recommendations
- D. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the annual training priority recommendations
- E. Continue to develop data collection strategies
- F. Continue to develop connections with the Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium

ECAP Summit stakeholder discussion questions in 3 small groups

Three of the recommendations regarding the early childhood career ladder are:

1. Recommendation #1: Whom It Serves & Its Purpose

There is confusion in the ECE field about whom the Career Ladder is for and a lack of clarity about its purpose.

Who is the Career Ladder for?

What is the purpose of the Career Ladder?

Discuss the committee recommendation (see separate sheet).

2. Recommendation #2: Experience Requirement

The subcommittee recommends: Reduce experience requirements across all Levels to six months. Review, and possibly revise, the bonus structure.

Do you agree? Review and discuss.

3. Recommendation #3: Reorganize Level III

The subcommittee recommends: Reorganize levels so that Level III-A becomes III and Level III-B becomes IV. Higher levels will also be renumbered for a logical sequence. As level certificates are specifically referenced in child care program licensing, STARS, and other connected systems, this change must be aligned, not unilateral. Other parts of the current system, such as already-issued level certificates, may also need to be reconciled.

Do you agree? Review and discuss.

Result #4: Vermont Invests in the Future Success of Children Early Childhood Investment Committee

The Early Childhood Investment committee seeks to increase the investment in Vermont's children and families. This is the newest ECAP committee convened in 2019 including advocacy partners, public policy leaders and early childhood systems leaders coming together to make long lasting and innovative change to benefit Vermont's children and families. The committee incorporates the recommendations of Building VT's Future Think Tank into their strategies and engagement of new partners and diversified funding sources. The committee meets the 3rd Thursday of the month from 12:00-2:00pm at the Vermont Community Loan Fund in Montpelier with a phone option.

Chair: Becca Schrader, Business Resource Manager, Vermont Community Loan Fund, Becca@vclf.org

Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Establishment of the committee with growing membership to inform process
- B. Conducted review of result 4 of the ECAP to inform update process and committee scope
- C. Successful advocacy efforts resulting in a much needed increase in investment for the Childcare Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)
- D. Successful PDG planning grant award including funding for early childhood budget, a priority for the coming year

Priorities 2019-2020

- A. Pursue Think Tank recommendations including an inventory of early childhood investment/spending.
- B. Build communication and collaboration with public and private partners toward identification of non-traditional funding streams to support early childhood initiatives (new and existing).
- C. Continue to develop the role of the committee, membership development and strong leadership with public and private co-chairs.

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 4

The ECAP review has helped the newly assembled Early Childhood Investment Committee clarify its role and suggest changing the result title to, 'Vermont Invests in the Future Success of Children.'

Activities in this result incorporate many of the *Building Vermont's Future from the Child Up Think Tank Report* recommendations including, 'identify opportunities to leverage investment from non-traditional sources' (recommendation 4) and, 'evaluate feasibility and strategy for a dedicated early childhood fund as a new cross-sector 'bucket' coordinating expenditures (recommendation 6).

ECAP Summit stakeholder discussion questions

- 1. What do you see as the benefit from having an inventory of early childhood investment/spending?
- 2. What do you think needs to be included?

Result #5: Data and accountability drive progress in early childhood outcomes

Data and Evaluation Committee

The Data and Evaluation Committee guides the collection, analysis, and application of high-quality data within the early childhood system. The group is composed of data stewards and evaluation experts working together to ensure data informs policy and practice. The group wants to help partners understand what is high-quality data, where it exists and is accessible to early childhood stakeholders. The committee meets the 4th Wednesday of the month from 2:30-4:00pm at Building Bright Futures office in Williston with a video conference option.

Co-chairs: Erin Roche, Program Development and Evaluation, Let's Grow Kids, erin@letsgrowkids.org and Heather Mattison, Child Development Division, heather.mattison@vermont.gov

Accomplishments and Key activities in 2018-2019

- A. Provided consultation to 5 ECAP committees on data sources and uses, helped committees develop performance measures in alignment with Results Based Accountability framework
- B. Supported Demand Study to inform childcare capacity and family preferences. Conducted webinar with lead researcher to help ECAP leaders understand and utilize report
- C. Advise on Needs Assessment process and definitions for the PDG grant
- D. Re-define role of the committee to support ECAP and system-wide promotion of high quality data, data literacy and expertise in evaluation methods

Priorities 2019-2020

- A. Create an early childhood data development agenda to ensure data informs policy and practice
- B. Continue to provide consultation to ECAP committees on data sources, uses and performance measures
- C. In collaboration with consultant, provide expert advice on performance measures for ECAP Update process
- D. Promote data literacy and access through Vermont Insights

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 5

New language highlights the evolving role of the Data & Evaluation committee, 'BBF Data & Evaluation Committee acts as an advisory group to the Vermont Early Childhood Data Governance Council' and 'support the work of other ECAP committees by advising on data sources and uses, and on implementation of Results Based Accountability. This committee helps other ECAP committees understand and interpret the data they use in their work to improve policy and practice.'

Action steps reflect this role such as, 'create an early childhood data development agenda to ensure data informs policy and practice. The agenda will include defining available data sources, uses for available data and identification of data gaps.'

Result #6: The early childhood system is innovative and integrated across sectors in order to better serve children and families

Early Childhood Interagency Coordination Team

The Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Team (ECICT) seeks to identify and eliminate barriers to collaboration, address the efforts related to the Early Childhood Action Plan or any other issues that local/regional partners may bring to the Team's attention. The Team's efforts result in a more cohesive voice of state government in Vermont's early childhood system by convening representatives of the state agencies represented on the Building Bright Futures State Council (Agency of Human Services, Education, Child Development Division, Vermont Department of Health, Department of Commerce). The team will work as a lateral partner of the BBF State Council to inform the Council on state policy matters, and to receive feedback and input on state policy matters from the Council. Committee meetings are for Team members only.

Chair: Reeva Murphy, Deputy Director, Child Development Division,
Reeva.Murphy@vermont.gov

Accomplishments and key activities in 2018-2019

- A. ECICT partners worked together, invited Early Multi-tiered systems of support (EMTSS) practitioners, national TA, aligning EMTSS with K-12 MTSS and will create a practice and implementation manual for new programs. MTSS is named in Act 173 naming preschool and up as a structure in the system.
- B. Developed trust and relationships with team members to promote integration and coordination across state partners. This dedicated time helps team members be informed on key issues that touch each others' spheres.
- C. The team welcomed Auburn Watersong, Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience Development as the Agency of Human Services representative to raise the work of trauma/ACES.
- D. Serve as a go-to table for interagency coordination, particularly in the emphasis on 'optimal child development' in the 2019 State Health Improvement Plan.
- E. Unanimous support for BBF as public-private partnership.

Priorities 2019-2020

- A. ECICT is a willing resource to ECAP committees when there are agency roles to play or troubleshoot issues across state partners. Create a system to make this a reality.
- B. We seek a community that pulls together around child development. Create alignment across state partners to create a system for early detection of children with developmental concerns. The state has adopted a strategy called Help Me Grow, continue to utilize and demonstrate support for this strategy.
- C. Leverage TA to align Medicaid and Early Childhood with partners involved in this project.
- D. Use shared language to improve collaboration in support of children and families, particularly with resilience/trauma and mental wellness.
- E. Forum to leverage greater investment in early childhood by sharing grant opportunities, building partnerships, and collaboration (such as AECM, PDG)

ECAP Update Process-highlights of the changes recommended for Result 6

Apply lessons learned over the recent years as partners invested time to build stronger, more trusting relationships, clearer communication and tools for integration across state agencies as well as strengthening Building Bright Futures State and Regional Councils.

Set new action steps to reflect recent successes and what we have learned from recent integration efforts. Move from original language, 'develop an agreement among the Governor's office, Agency of Education, Agency of Human Services and Building Bright Futures to create a collaborative team' to new language that recognizes these established systems, 'utilize the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Team (ECICT) to develop, strengthen and align clear structures to reduce barriers and build opportunities for integration.'

ECAP Summit stakeholder discussion questions

1. When children and families experience services and supports, what does it look like that show the system is integrated? What are examples where you see this in Vermont?
2. What are opportunities to be more integrated?