Amazing Early Childhood Experiences
Rethinking our approach to early childhood
HB1416 | 19-21 Legislative Session
Transitioning DPI Office of Early Learning to DHS

Legislative Sponsors:
Representatives Weisz, Devlin, J. Nelson, Westlind
Senators Hogan, Lee, K. Roers
During the **first 5 years** of life, emotionally nourishing relationships lay the **foundation** for lifelong health and well-being.

The caring adults who touch the lives of infants, toddlers and preschoolers can maximize our long-term impact in ensuring all children have an **opportunity to realize** their full potential.
Parents in workforce

73% of the 44,237 North Dakota households who have children younger than age 5 likely have at least some need for child care as all available parents are in the workforce.
Half of the 1,591 children in foster care in North Dakota are age 7 or younger. (2020)
DHS 2021-2025 KEY PRIORITIES

**Strong Stable Families**
- Maintain family connections
- Improve stability and prevent crises
- Promote and support recovery and well-being

**Early Childhood Experiences**
- Support workforce needs with improved access to childcare
- Help kids realize their potential with top quality early experiences
- Align programs for maximum return on investment

**Services Closer to Home**
- Create pathways that help people access the right service at the right time
- Engage proactively with providers to expand access to services

**Efficiency Through Redesign**
- Embrace process redesign to find efficiencies in our work
- Leverage technology to support greater efficiency, quality and customer service

**High-Performing Team**
- Develop a One DHS Team culture
- Engage team with opportunities for learning and development
- Implement fiscal scorecard to drive efficiency and effectiveness

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**Reinforce the Foundations of Well-being**

- Economic Health
- Behavioral Health
- Physical Health
EARLY CHILDHOOD IN DHS

A team built to embody the interconnectedness of human services work, who through their work will emphasize the essentialness of a two-gen approach.
EARLY CHILDHOOD IN DHS
How does the work of this new division fit together with the broader work of Family Stability and Community Inclusion?

Early Childhood Experiences
Build greater access to quality early childhood experiences so kids age 0-5 from all backgrounds and circumstances have the opportunity to reach their potential.

Children & Families
Help families who are struggling avoid disruption by having access to the help they need to build stability and well-being together.

Intellectual & Developmental Disability Svcs
Maximize community inclusion, independence and self-sufficiency to prevent institutionalization, and to enable individuals to transition from institutions to community living.

Vocational Rehab
Assists North Dakotans with disabilities to enter or re-enter the workforce through individualized services.

Aging & Adult Services
Help older adults and individuals with physical disabilities to remain in their own homes and communities.

Economic Assistance
Help lower income North Dakotans when they are struggling to make ends meet by connecting them to resources that can help meet their basic needs, preventing greater and more damaging crises.

Child Support
The purpose of the Child Support program is to help parents meet the needs of their children by securing appropriate and sustainable child support.

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The purpose of the Early Childhood division is to build greater access to quality early childhood experiences so kids age 0-5 from all backgrounds and circumstances have the opportunity to reach their potential.
**EARLY CHILDHOOD**
In ND early childhood is a mixed delivery system, involving both public and private partners using both federal and state funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept of Human Services</th>
<th>Private Training and Early Childhood Supports</th>
<th>Public Schools and Head Start Programs</th>
<th>Dept of Public Instruction</th>
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</table>
| • Early Childhood division | • Training providers  
• Children and Family Services – home visiting, child protection, abuse prevention  
• Dev Disabilities – early intervention, in-home supports  
• Economic Assistance – child care assistance program | • Public Pre-K programs  
• Early Childhood Special Education services  
• Head Start and Early Head Start | • Office of Special Education  
• K-12 Coordinating Council  
• Comprehensive State Literacy program |
And then there’s our data...
EARLY CHILDHOOD TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS
A host of opportunities to better integrate the complex array of systems that support Early Childhood Experiences in ND
**EARLY CHILDHOOD INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEM**
Collects, integrates, maintains, stores, and reports information from early childhood programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrate</th>
<th>Integrate data from various early childhood programs and services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enable</td>
<td>Enable decision making to improve the coordination among and quality of services</td>
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<td>Support</td>
<td>Support collaborative thinking between service providers, state agencies and policymakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>Improve efficiency of data management and reporting for stakeholders</td>
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<td>Maximize</td>
<td>Maximize return on resources invested in collecting quality data</td>
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<td>Inform</td>
<td>Inform policies and practices that support better outcomes for children and families.</td>
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Launching a new initiative...

Best in Class
HB1466 | 19-21 Legislative Session
Best in Class Program

Legislative Sponsors:
Representatives Weisz, Rohr, Westlind
Senators Dever, Lee
BEST IN CLASS PROGRAM
Quality early childhood experiences for children in the year before they enter kindergarten

First cohort will provide grant funding to 20 groups / rooms

$120,000 per classroom; $20,000 match required

Assure maximum access and inclusion, creating settings inclusive of household income and children with special needs

Applications open week of June 21, 2021
BEST IN CLASS PROGRAM
Quality early childhood experiences for children in the year before they enter kindergarten

Participating in a Best in Class cohort means a program will receive:

• Higher-touch supports for in-room staff – including in-room coaching and inclusion supports

• Connection to health and development screenings

• Thorough evaluation of quality components of the environment

• Opportunity to help inform how we measure impact of early childhood investments