

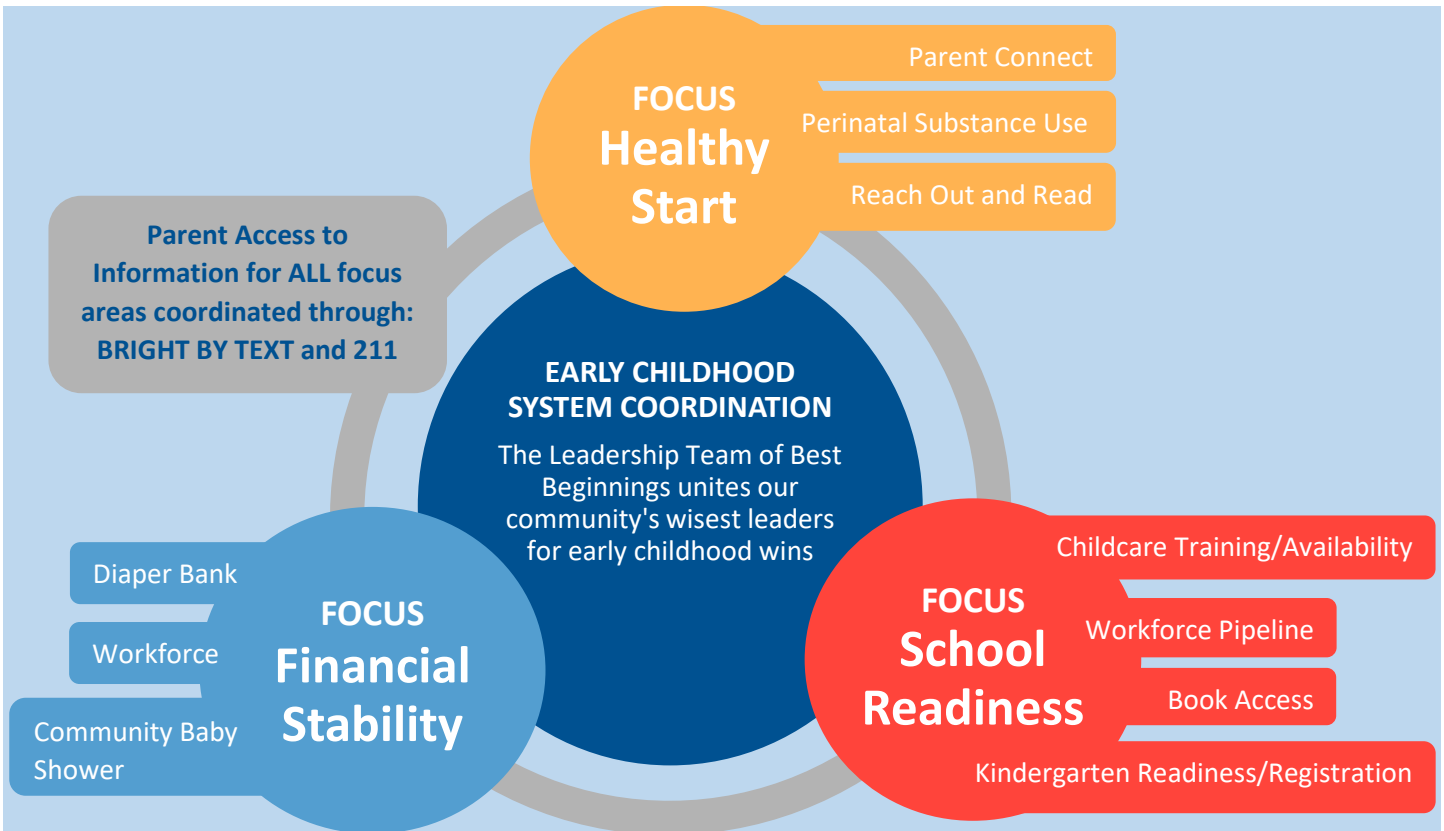
VISION:

Strong Families - Thriving Children

MISSION:

Best Beginnings Yellowstone County strengthens early childhood systems of care to ensure that all children prenatally to kindergarten have the language, health, and emotional building blocks necessary for healthy brain construction.

GOAL: All children in Yellowstone County enter school socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically ready to thrive and are reading on grade level by third grade.



BEST BEGINNINGS PARTNERS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AWARE, Early Head Start Billings Chamber of Commerce Billings Clinic Billings Public Library Billings Public Schools Dr. Ginny Mermel, PhD, CNS Early Childhood Intervention Explorers Academy Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley Family Support Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRDC, District 7 Kountry Kare Child Care Parent & Child Reading RiverStone Health St. Vincent Healthcare The Family Tree Center United Way of Yellowstone County Wise Wonder's Children's Museum Young Families Early Head Start
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FOCUS AREA: HEALTHY START

PARENT CONNECT

What It Is: Parenting programs in Billings unite to provide support and referrals to parents in the first 1,000 Days (pregnancy to Age 2). Over one million brain connections are formed per second in the first years of life.

2019 Progress: New Baby Surveys collected from Mothers in Labor & Delivery Departments; Calls and emails to mothers wanting follow up.

2019 WINS

700+ Connects

With new mothers via email, phone, or appointment.

1,600+ Connects

since 2017.

2020 Priorities: Continuous Quality Improvement for Connect processes including expansion to prenatal audiences, use of texting for initial connect, better leverage of existing parent education networks at hospitals as well as Bright By Text and 211

PERINATAL SUBSTANCE USE

What It Is: Commitment to work together to address substance use in first 1,000 days (pregnancy to age 2). Montana currently has the second highest rate of removal to foster care in the country, with Yellowstone County being the worst in the state. 80% of child welfare cases in YC are due to drugs with 4 in 5 related to methamphetamine addiction.

2019 Progress: St. Vincent Healthcare perinatal substance use project leader joined BB Leadership Team; planning meetings; assessment and planning in conjunction with Substance Abuse Connect coalition.

2019 WINS

Funding secured

for perinatal pilot project.

Joint task force

established with *Substance Abuse Connect* for 2020 pilot project.

2020 Priorities: Expand referral capacity and follow through with mothers who screen positive for Substance Abuse during pregnancy or at labor and delivery

REACH OUT AND READ

What It Is: National evidence based program implemented by pediatricians at well-child checks. Promotes healthy brain development, furthers language acquisition, and helps families build meaningful bonds. United Way of Yellowstone County coordinates this initiative with The Children's Clinic, Billings Clinic, and St. Vincent Healthcare. United Way secures the books, delivers books to pediatricians, and tracks progress.

2019 Progress: Secured Best Beginnings Leadership Team oversight for this program and integrated into 2020 Best Beginnings Plan for optimal growth and support.

2019 WINS

Over 8,400 Books

put in the hands of children at well child check-ups by pediatricians.

Funding Secured

from Best Beginnings for 2020 Books.

2020 Priorities: Funds for 2021 Books, add clinics and pediatricians

FOCUS AREA: FINANCIAL STABILITY

DIAPER BANK

What It Is: Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley provides diapers to families in need. Family Promise distributed 71,380 diapers to 676 babies in 2019!

2019 Progress: Felicia Berg, of Family Promise joined the BB Leadership Team. BB committed to synergistic efforts with Family Promise to support and expand the Diaper Bank.

2019 WINS

BB Grant from First Interstate Bank
bought 8,200 Diapers for Diaper Bank.

5,000 Diapers Monthly
from Diaper Bank to two BB Members because of new partnerships (AWARE and Young Families Early Head Start). Saves over \$3,000/month.

30,000 Diapers
on the way in 2020 with grant from Best Beginnings.

2020 Priorities: Secure Warehouse, Coordinate Diaper Drives and Awareness, Increase capacity to grow Best Beginnings member partnerships

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

What It Is: Billings Chamber of Commerce adopted Early Childhood as a Workforce Priority, with their Director of Communications & Workforce Development, Kelly McCandless, taking the lead. McCandless has national exposure to early childhood workforce challenges and opportunities through a National Chamber of Commerce Fellowship Program.

2019 Progress: Kelly McCandless joined the BB Leadership Team and learned about local early childhood workforce efforts. BB and Chamber committed to synergistic versus duplicative efforts.

2019 WINS

Family Forward MT
Connected with Governor’s Summit stakeholders and *Zero to Five* on the potential of bringing *Family Forward* (a successful workforce initiative) to Montana.

Two National Speakers
featured at the November Chamber A.M. event. Topic: **“Making the Case for Early Childhood Development and Childcare as Workforce Issues”**

Coming Feb 28
Chambers of Commerce and early childhood coalitions from MT will connect in Bozeman to share information and discuss potential of **Family Forward**.

2020 Priority: Establish synergy with Ready Children Work Group and Zero to Five MT Office to increase attention to early childhood workforce impacts and needs

FOCUS AREA: SCHOOL READINESS

READY CHILDREN

<p>What It Is: BB work group uniting stakeholders to ensure all kids in Billings are ready for Kindergarten.</p> <p>2019 Progress: Childcare training, Support for book access, Bright By Text sign-ups, Common messaging about school readiness; Connects for workforce pipeline.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2019 WINS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">725 Hours training provided to 125 childcare providers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reading Projects Family Support Network/ Family Tree Center</p> <p style="text-align: center;">400 + High School Student connections at Career Fairs, with 78 personal follow ups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5,000+ Families connected with at four community events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Promotion of Library's <i>1,000 Books By Five</i> campaign</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Billings Public Library promoted Pathway to Kindergarten common messaging to their audience</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2020 Priorities: Continue Childcare Training and Messaging to Parents, Book Access, Transition to Kindergarten, Connect workforce efforts with Chamber</p>	

PARENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION

BRIGHT BY TEXT

<p>What It Is: Sends empowering texts to parents of young children, including parenting tips, videos, resources, and local events. Proven to increase school readiness.</p> <p>2019 Progress: Launched BBT in four counties – Trained BBT leads -- Marketing – Local message content created – Sign-up campaign</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2019 WINS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">569 Parents Enrolled</p> <p style="text-align: center;">42,600 Messages Sent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4 New Counties coming onboard in 2020</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2020 Priorities: Increase parent enrollment, create quality local messages, secure funding, manage growth throughout Montana</p>	

MONTANA 211

<p>What It Is: Website and call center that links people to needed resources.</p> <p>2019 Progress: First full year of call service for Yellowstone County. Number of monthly calls grew from 2 in the first month (Oct. 2018) to 296 in Oct. 2019.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2019 WINS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2,391 Calls from Yellowstone County</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6,024 Web Views* in YC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">34,670 Web Views* in MT (224% increase from 2016)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2020 Priorities: Secure sustainable funding, Join 211 Counts</p>	

*Unique page views on Montana211.org