Early Childhood Development: Challenges and Opportunities for Montana’s Workforce

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Future Workforce

• Nobel Prize winning University of Chicago Economics Professor James Heckman
• Great gains are to be had by investing in early childhood development- from birth to age five.
• www.heckmanequation.org
Investing in early childhood has proven to have a large rate of return—10% up to 16% ROI in model early childhood programs for low-income children and families.

- ROI comes from decreases in crime, increased tax revenues from higher earnings, and decreases in public assistance to the participants.
Early Foundations
Building the Foundation

- Serve and Return
- Building Soft Skills
- Toxic Stress

Early years builds foundation for future learning = future workforce
MT CHILDREN UNDER 6 IN NEED OF CARE:
41,000

14,000 - SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

27,000 - BOTH PARENTS WORKING
Montana Child Care Center Slots: 12,500

Montana Family-Based Child Care Center Slots: 12,500

Children in Non-Licensed Child Care: 8,200

Children Cared for by Family, Friends & Relatives: 7,800
Montana’s Child Care Industry

• Contributes $143 million annually and provides more than 6,600 full-time equivalent jobs.

• Benefits all industries throughout Montana by enabling parents to work, attend school or training.
Balancing Work and Family

- Recent study in July 2009 reports that 82 percent of parents, when faced with a child care crisis in the past year, solved the problem by missing work.
- Stress leads to a costly rise in absenteeism and impacts work performance.
- Special considerations for Montana given small business environment.
What Companies Can Do?

• Family-friendly practices have potential to significantly impact both the role of the employee in the organization and the health of the company overall.

For more information contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Office
Early Childhood Business Summits

• Breakfast meeting with invited business leaders in Missoula, Hamilton, Billings, Kalispell and Havre

• Presentation from Montana Kids Count, local early childhood expert, and facilitated discussion.
Next Steps

- Online survey for small businesses
- Resource guides for business leaders and early childhood advocates
- Work with business and economic development associations
Initiatives in Montana

• Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Program- Administered by the MT Early Childhood Services Bureau
  – Workforce development
  – Quality Rating Improvement System with monetary incentives
  – Infrastructure to administer the programs and to provide training and technical assistance
Questions?

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