

Info Sheet: Montana Early Care and Education Career Development

MSU Early Childhood Project

Bozeman, Montana

Fall 2006

Training Update

What training is required for licensed and registered child care providers in Montana?

All staff in early care and education programs who work in the direct care of children 160 hours per year or more must complete **eight hours of approved training annually** *with the exception of center directors*. Each staff person is assigned a role type (for example, 'primary caregiver') by the licensor and the director/owner. This role designation determines whether an individual is required to meet this annual training requirement.

Once the licensor has entered all required documentation for staff into the CCUBS (Child Care Under the Big Sky) computer system, they are assigned a Person Number (PS#). This PS# and contact information is sent to the Early Childhood Project's (ECP) database through an interface from the state. This is the key link that allows an individual's training to be tracked electronically when you use it to sign-in at approved training. If you or the facility you work in are not required to be licensed in Montana, remain active on The Practitioner Registry to keep your training record updated **and** sign-in to approved training events with your Social Security number. The ECP mails out PS# cards monthly based upon the staff information that has been received from CCUBS.

What training is required annually of child care center directors?

With the implementation of the new day care regulations, child care center directors are now required to complete **15 hours of annual approved training**. DPHHS will begin enforcing this requirement for those child care centers whose licenses expire after December 31, 2006.

Does the required Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) training count?

For all people working in licensed and registered child care programs, two hours of CACFP training counts toward annual training requirements for licensing, Merit Pay and/or The Practitioner Registry.

Do First Aid and CPR training hours count?

This training is required for all staff in licensed and registered programs and for this reason does not count toward annual training hours.

Does the four hour New Provider Orientation required to be licensed or registered count?

No, again this is required. If you are working in a licensed/registered program you will need to complete an additional 8 hours of training before the annual license renewal date.

However, the four hours of New Provider Orientation will count with the Initial Application for the Pre-Professional Level on the Career Path.

How do I find approved training?

The ECP's website at www.montana.edu/ecp has a Statewide Training Calendar that lists all approved events searchable by Child Care Resource and Referral district. Every CCR & R agency publishes an annual training calendar with a rich array of choices to meet your professional development needs. Other community-based agencies and professional organizations also sponsor approved training, so keep your eyes and ears open for events in your locale.

Upcoming conferences and special training events in the state, region, or nation are also posted on the website. Distance learning training options approved in Montana that include on-line and correspondence options are listed. If you are unsure of whether training is approved or will be approved, just call the ECP's toll-free phone number and ask before you enroll or pay a fee!

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College courses offered by **regionally accredited colleges and universities** also qualify with one semester credit equivalent to 15 hours of training. All approved training or education needs to relate to the ten content areas of the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base.

Other relevant training in your area may count for training hours and must be documented using an Individual Request for Training Approval Form also available on the website or by phone or email request.

How do I verify my training hours for licensing, Merit Pay and/or The Practitioner Registry?

When you sign-in with your PS# (or SS# if you are active on The Practitioner Registry) to an approved event, those hours will be entered into your personal on-line training record. You may view and download your training record by going to the ECP website and clicking on *Practitioner Registry and Practitioner Training Records*. This is the site that is used by state licensors, Best Beginnings program monitors and/or the ECP to check your training (and your status on The Practitioner Registry). Every approved event has a certificate for you. If the trainer does not give you one at the end of the training, **ask for it!** This is your own way of documenting your attendance. Keep all training certificates in your own Professional Development/Training File.

What is the Practitioner Registry?

It is a key part of Montana's Early Care and Education Career Development program. It recognizes and honors practitioners' training, education and experience by placing them at a level on the Career Path and awarding them a certificate. The Registry requires annual continuing training and education above and beyond licensing requirements. For all levels beyond the Pre-Professional Level, if you are working in a licensed or registered facility, you will need eight hours of training for licensing each year plus an additional 15 hours to remain active on The Registry for a total of 23 hours.

Your active Practitioner Registry status makes you eligible for many of Montana's Best Beginnings programs including Mini-Grants, Provider Grants, Merit Pay, the Infant/Toddler Stipend and Star Quality. All of these programs are designed to help you and your program achieve your professional goals and ultimately improve the quality of early care and education for children and families.

What is Merit Pay?

This is a Best Beginnings program designed to award you for completing training. There are three types of Merit Pay administered by the Early Childhood Services Bureau. Each type of Merit pay has a specific application deadline. You must have a current Practitioner Registry certificate to receive your financial award upon training completion. Awards vary from \$200 - \$750 depending on the type of Merit Pay for which you apply. Go to **www.childcare.mt.gov** for more information.

Who can I contact for help?

Early Childhood Project at 406.994.4746 or 1.800.213.6310 or ecp@montana.edu

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency in your area listed on the ECP website or the CCR & R Network website at www.montanachildcare.com

Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)/Early Childhood Services Bureau at 1.866.239.0458 or www.childcare.mt.gov

DPHHS/Quality Assurance Division/Child Care Licensing at 1.800.444.2012 or your local licensor.



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