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Early Childhood Action Plan Update Process Highlights of Recommended Changes Prepared for the May 20th State Advisory Council

The six results have been the focus of BBF's ECAP Committees since 2014, and have driven real and tangible progress for Vermont's young children across sectors. With some of the work of the ECAP completed, and other aspects of the early childhood system evolving, we are updating the document to reflect current priorities and strategies we will use to best support Vermont children and families.

Here are the six ECAP results and highlights of the changes committees are recommending to the plan.

1. All children have a healthy start.

- a. Align strategies with State Health Improvement Plan 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.'
- b. Incorporate resilience and trauma-informed care that is now so well received across the state. Call out specific strategies to build resilience, improve access to mental health services, screen for social determinants of health, and build protective factors such as breastfeeding, nutrition, and physical activity.

2. Families and communities play a leading role in a child's well-being.

- a. 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.
- b. Change language from a 'for-parent' perspective to be more about facilitating parents' ability to have agency in decisions about their families and children. An example of this change moves from original language, 'develop and implement intentional, evidence-based parent education and support opportunities' to 'create opportunities for parents to educate and inform the system.'

3. All children and families have access to high quality opportunities that meet their needs.

- a. 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.

- b. 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.'

4. Vermont invests in prevention and plans for the future success of children.

- a. 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.'
- b. 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).

5. Data and accountability drive progress in early childhood outcomes.

- a. 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.'
- b. 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.'

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

- a. 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.
- b. 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.'

Early Childhood Action Plan Criteria for Document Update 2019



This document outlines six criteria to guide the ECAP review process over the next several months. The Working Group and ECAP committees use it to see with different perspectives to inform the document review.

	<p>1. Research and Evidence Informed What changes are needed to address gaps and unmet needs informed by data and research; in particular PDG Needs Assessment? Do we have information telling us this is a best practice?</p>
	<p>2. Promotes Equity What changes are needed to increase opportunity for those who historically have been excluded and reforms the ways in which institutions operate to lessen disparities and eliminate discrimination?</p>
	<p>3. Support the Full Participation of Each and Every Child and Family What practices are needed to support children of diverse cultures, languages, abilities, and life circumstances? What efforts will engage their families?</p>
	<p>4. Measurable Is this measurable using a Results Based Accountability framework to measure impact over time? Do we have information telling us this is a need? Do we have disaggregated data to track potential inequities?</p>
	<p>5. Coordinated Are we creating a process that facilitates collaboration among diverse partners and across sectors, coordination, and policy alignment to leverage existing and new resources efficaciously in Vermont's Birth-Eight system?</p>
	<p>6. Leverage Are there outdated or completed strategies? How can we strengthen strategies to use clear language and ensure they are timely, doable and build on current strengths and assets?</p>