

MSU Early Childhood Project

Quarterly Report

Fiscal Year 2026: Oct 1, 2025 - Sept 30, 2026

Q4: July 1, 2026 - September 30, 2026

Goal I: Promote professional development options for early childhood practitioners through continuous quality improvement efforts and data analysis.

Objective 1: Ensure a robust system of professional development opportunities to be available in Montana.

Training Events	Approved	College Credit *	Individual Request *	Cancelled	Denied	Total
Q1	245	37	477	20	1	780
Q2	218	6	515	10	0	749
Q3	177	33	454	28	0	692
Q4	193	6	682	19	0	900
Total	833	82	2128	77	1	3,121

* In this table, College Credits and Individual Requests represent events that must be manually approved and uploaded by ECP Staff.

Approved Training Event Type	In-Person	Distance	Total
Q1	125	181	306
Q2	87	131	218
Q3	87	90	177
Q4	115	72	187
Total	414	474	888

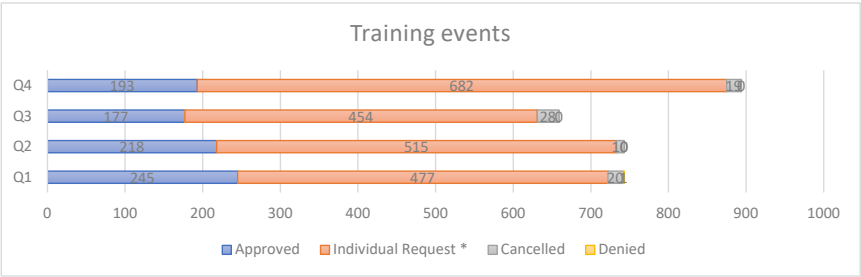
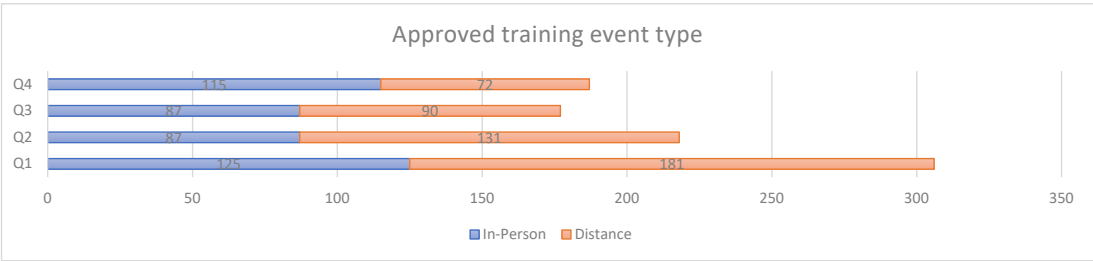
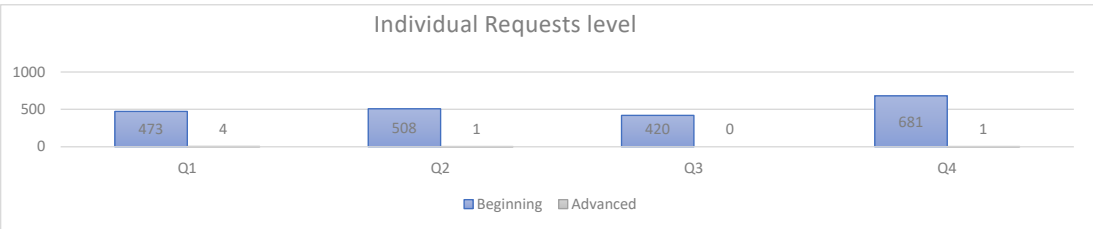
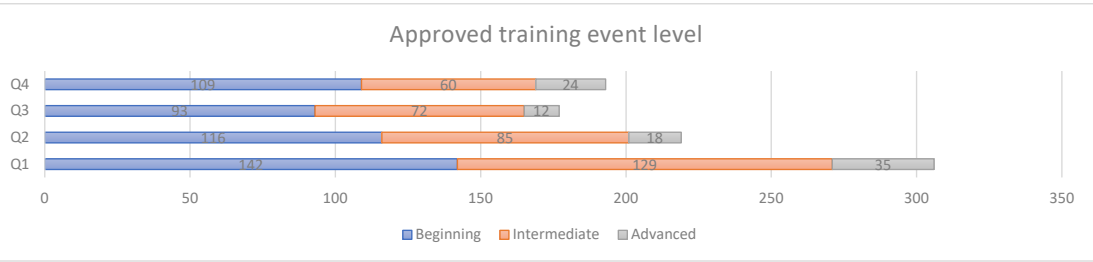
Diverse training modalities are approved and available to providers in Montana.

Individual Requests Level	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
Q1	473	0	4	477
Q2	508	0	1	509
Q3	420	1	0	421
Q4	681	0	1	682
Total	2082	1	6	2089

This table tracks the use of a policy update allowing users to select course level when submitting individual training requests.

Approved Training Event Level	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
Q1	142	129	35	306
Q2	116	85	18	219
Q3	93	72	12	177
Q4	109	60	24	193
Total	460	346	89	895

Training events at all levels were available to providers.



Objective 2: Support growth of Professional Development Specialists to improve the knowledge, skills and professional development for early childhood trainers and the quality of training offered

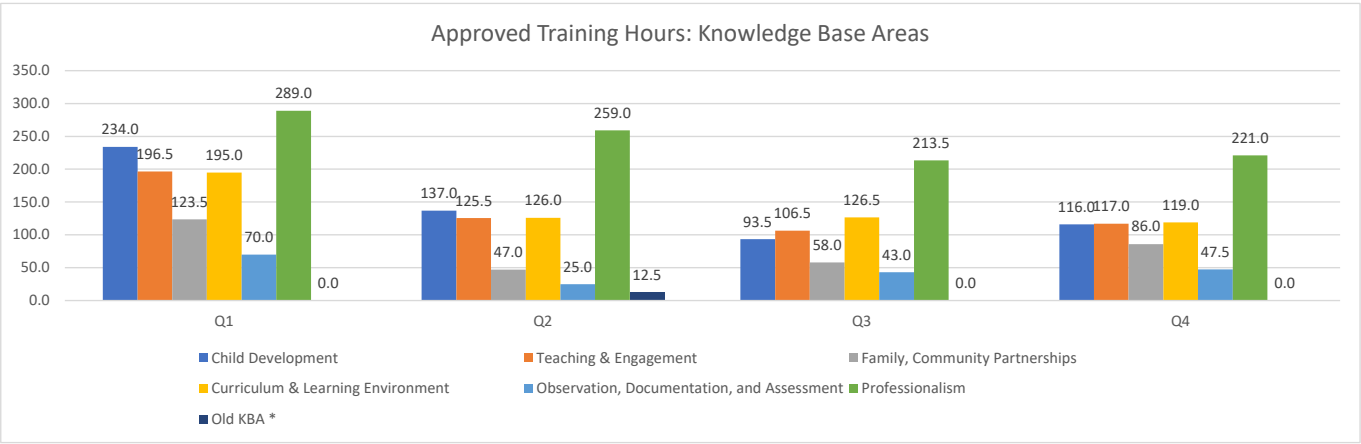
Professional Development Specialist (PDS)	Submitted applications	Finalized applications
Q1	52	32
Q2	52	42
Q3	31	21
Q4	45	33
Total	180	128

Current PDS Trainer	Count
Q1	118
Q2	116
Q3	119
Q4	121
Total	474

Objective 3: Ensure trainings of all knowledge base areas are available for practitioners through the Professional Development Approval System.

Approved Training Hours: Knowledge Base Areas	Child Development	Teaching & Engagement	Family, Community Partnerships	Curriculum & Learning Environment	Observation, Documentation, and Assessment	Professionalism	Old KBA *	Total hours
Q1	234.0	196.5	123.5	195.0	70.0	289.0	0.0	1108.0
Q2	137.0	125.5	47.0	126.0	25.0	259.0	12.5	732.0
Q3	93.5	106.5	58.0	126.5	43.0	213.5	0.0	641.0
Q4	116.0	117.0	86.0	119.0	47.5	221.0	0.0	706.5
Total	580.5	545.5	314.5	566.5	185.5	982.5	12.5	3187.5

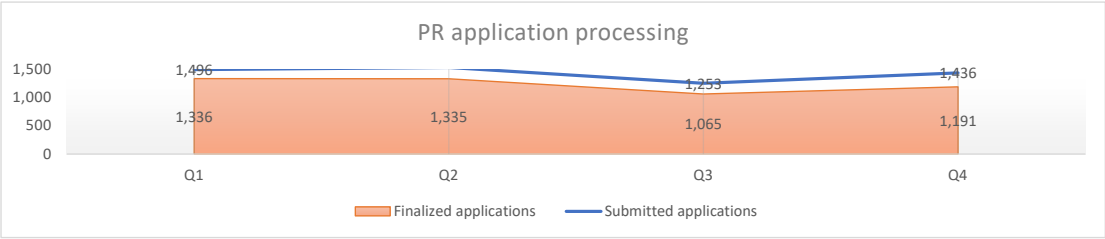
* Old KBA is being filtered out of events as they are routinely updated in the system.



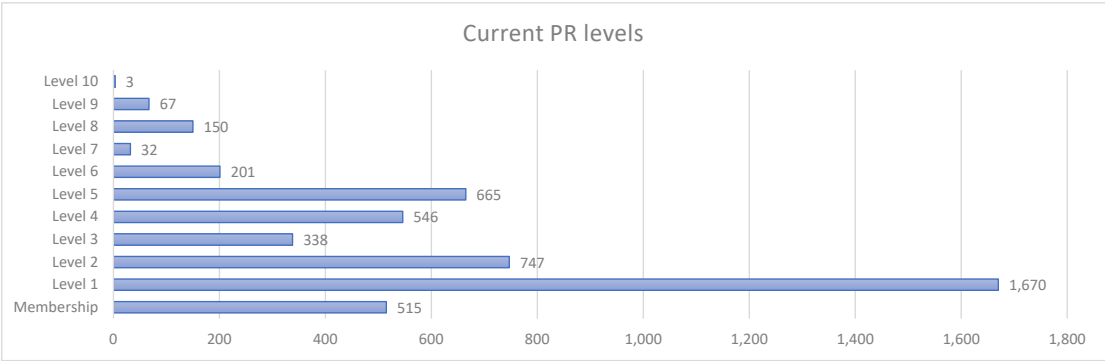
Goal II: Promote and incentivize workforce development, professional recognition, and program quality improvement through the Practitioner Registry

Objective 1: Promote the importance of the registry and career planning to continue to professionalize the field of Early Childhood

Practitioner Registry (PR)	Submitted applications	Finalized applications
Q1	1,496	1,336
Q2	1,533	1,335
Q3	1,253	1,065
Q4	1,436	1,191
Total	5,718	4,927



Current PR Levels	Count *
Membership	515
Level 1	1,670
Level 2	747
Level 3	338
Level 4	546
Level 5	665
Level 6	201
Level 7	32
Level 8	150
Level 9	67
Level 10	3
Total	4,934



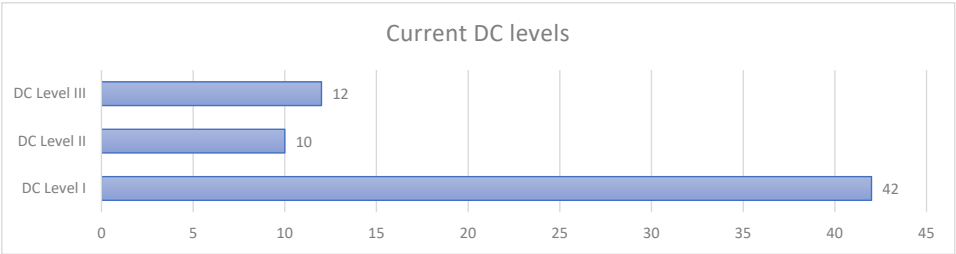
Over half of the current practitioner registry has earned Level 2 or higher.

*Note that this data report was updated in Q2 to more accurately count only

Current Registry users. There will be an artificial 'decrease' in user count in Q2, 2026 due to this update. This drop is not a true representation of loss of registry users.

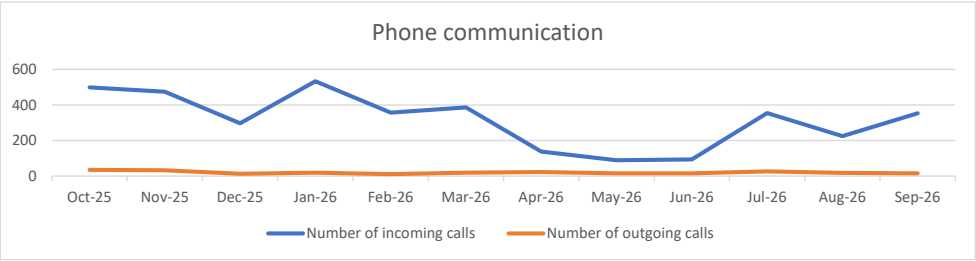
Current DC Levels	Count
DC Level I	42
DC Level II	10
DC Level III	12
Total	64

Director Credential (DC)	Submitted applications	Finalized applications
Q1	35	13
Q2	34	21
Q3	28	12
Q4	39	19
Total	136	65

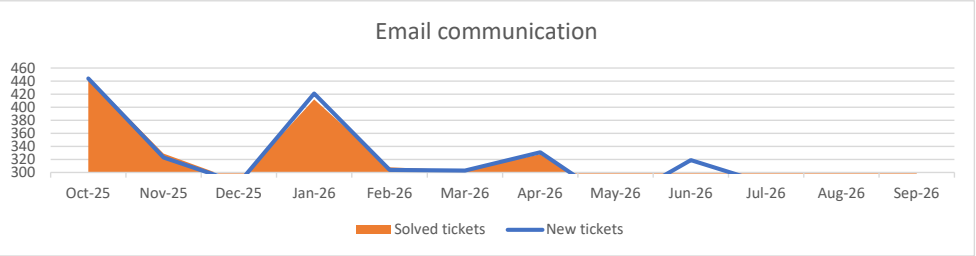


Objective 2: Conduct strategies to support Practitioner Registry participation

Phone communication	Number of incoming calls	Number of outgoing calls	Total call duration	Average call duration
Oct-25	499	35	6:44:12	0:03:18
Nov-25	474	32	6:19:14	0:03:17
Dec-25	297	13	5:26:14	0:03:11
Jan-26	533	19	6:44:44	2:57:00
Feb-26	357	11	4:50:40	3:11:00
Mar-26	386	19	5:40:45	3:32:00
Apr-26	138	23	7:12:42	3:34:00
May-26	89	15	5:14:27	3:18:00
Jun-26	94	16	5:39:22	3:36:00
Jul-26	354	26	5:03:28	3:53:00
Aug-26	225	18	4:21:06	3:57:00
Sep-26	353	16	5:35:01	3:23:00
Total	3,799	243	68:51:55	31:30:46



Email communication via Zendesk	New tickets	Solved tickets	Average satisfaction rating	Percent tickets satisfaction rated	Average first reply time (mins)
Oct-25	444	446	93.4%	13.7%	30
Nov-25	323	329	93.1%	8.9%	31
Dec-25	284	287	83.3%	8.4%	29
Jan-26	421	412	94.7%	9.2%	43
Feb-26	304	308	100.0%	10.4%	30
Mar-26	303	303	97.1%	11.6%	33
Apr-26	331	328	97.4%	11.6%	34
May-26	253	253	95.8%	9.5%	41
Jun-26	319	219	100.0%	10.7%	41
Jul-26	283	288	100.0%	16.7%	38
Aug-26	285	286	97.1%	11.9%	25
Sep-26	224	218	100.0%	9.6%	20
Totals & Averages	3,774	3,677	96.0%	11.0%	33



ECP provides excellent technical support to providers. During the contract year, the average satisfaction score was 96% among 3,774 total tickets created.

Objective 3: Maintain Professional Development Records (PDRs) for staff in licensed/registered child care facilities and other professionals current on the Registry

New accounts created (with access to PDRs)	Number of accounts
Q1	488
Q2	491
Q3	522
Q4	596
Total	2,097

Objective 4: Coordinate program scholarships to achieve national accreditation

NAEYC	Number approved	Amount
Q1	0	\$ -
Q2	0	\$ -
Q3	3	\$ 2,050.00
Q4	0	\$ -
Total	3	\$ 2,050.00

NAFCC	Number approved	Amount
Q1	0	\$ -
Q2	1	\$ 820.00
Q3	1	\$ 615.00
Q4	1	\$ 385.00
Total	3	\$ 1,820.00

Q4 NAFCC details: Kalispell, Self Study.

Objective 5: Promote and process workforce incentives to support professional development

Please see the [appendix](#) for more detailed visualizations of childcare apprentices in Montana.

PDIA-HE	Number approved	Amount Allocated	Amount Awarded
Q1	0	\$ -	TBD
Q2	20	\$ 32,400.00	TBD
Q3	0	\$ -	TBD
Q4	13	\$ 20,100.00	TBD
Total	33	\$ 52,500.00	

Award for Achievement of High School Equivalency (new per quarter)	Number approved	Amount
Q1	1	\$ 200.00
Q2	0	\$ -
Q3	0	\$ -
Q4	2	\$ 400.00
Total	0	\$ 600.00

CDA's Earned	PD Specialist	Family Child Care	Infant / Toddler	Pre-School	Total
Q1	0	1	9	4	14
Q2	1	0	9	3	13
Q3	0	0	8	5	13
Q4	1	0	4	4	9
Total	2	1	30	16	49

Pre-Apprenticeship	Number Enrolled	Total Amount
Q1	0	\$ -
Q2	0	\$ -
Q3	0	\$ -
Q4	0	\$ -
Total	0	\$ -

New Apprenticeship (per quarter)	Number Enrolled
Q1	12
Q2	10
Q3	10
Q4	37
Total	69

Current Active Apprentices	MECAP	CDA Apprenticeship	Count
Q1	19	12	31
Q2	18	10	28
Q3	17	10	27
Q4	5	37	42
Total	59	69	128

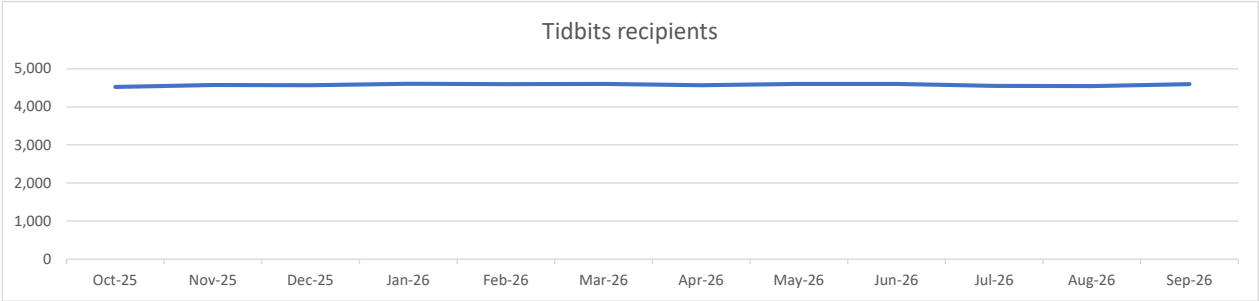
More Quarter 4 Updates:

Submitted \$9250 of MECAP Incentives and \$1950 for CDA Completion incentives this quarter.

Three people applied for CDA renewal vouchers and 1 was approved. (\$250)

Objective 6: Utilize marketing materials and other strategies to educate about Career Development services and programs

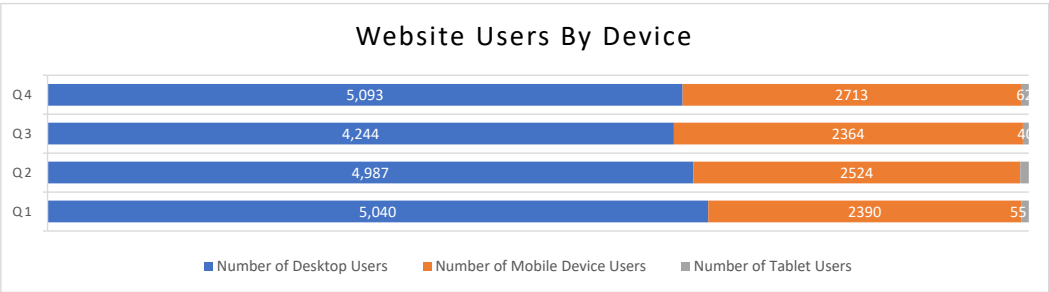
Tidbits	Number of recipients
Oct-25	4,524
Nov-25	4,573
Dec-25	4,569
Jan-26	4,607
Feb-26	4,596
Mar-26	4,605
Apr-26	4,568
May-26	4,606
Jun-26	4,605
Jul-26	4,552
Aug-26	4,548
Sep-26	4,595



MT ECP's newsletter, "Tidbits" was disseminated to over 93% of Practitioner Registry members in the third quarter.

Website Use by Device	Number of Desktop Users	Number of Mobile Device Users	Number of Tablet Users	Total Users
Q1	5,040	2390	55	7485
Q2	4,987	2524	65	7576
Q3	4,244	2364	40	6648
Q4	5,093	2713	62	7868
Total	19,364	9991	222	29577

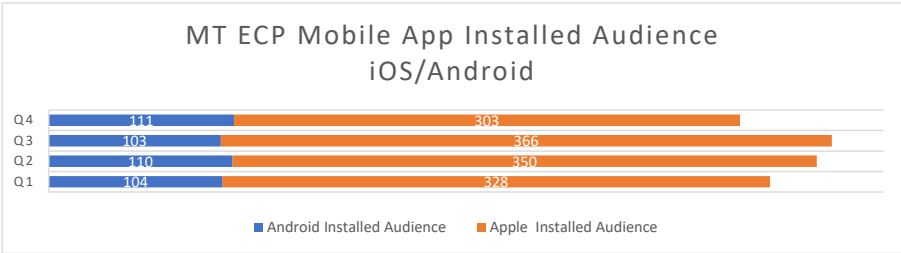
Desktop devices represent 65% of the total website audience, while mobile devices represented 35%. Website development and support for desktop users should be a top priority for supporting EC Workforce and community.



PDS Newsletter	Number of recipients
Nov-25	108
Feb-26	115
May-26	111
Aug-26	117

ECP Mobile Application	Android Installed Audience	Apple Installed Audience
Q1	104	328
Q2	110	350
Q3	103	366
Q4	111	303
Total	428	1,347

MT ECP App is rated 5 stars.
MT ECP App continues to increase in audience reach / impression as more people see the application.



Goal III: Enhance data collection and reporting capabilities to inform policy and practice more effectively around professional development and the workforce

Objective 1: Participate in data collection and sharing to inform administrators, policy makers and researchers at state and national levels about the early childhood workforce and professional development in Montana

- Updated, corrected, and completed data pull and analysis for a national workforce turnover report for the Childcare Trust. This publication will be posted to their website in November of 2026. (Childcaretrust.org)
- Participated in FFN survey that informed NWRA national report of the current status and support of FFN across the country. The goal of the report was to look for actionable ways to improve FFN inclusion in systems for future reporting that leads to data informed change. This report was included with the quarterly report submission to ECSB and is available on request from the Research / Data Analyst at ECP.

Objective 2: Coordinate with Registry Consortium and assure best practice standards for data management and reporting by maintaining membership with NWRA Per (National Workforce Registry Alliance, Partners in Employment Reporting)

- Represented Montana registry by participating in monthly Community of Practice conference calls.
- Served as a member of the Data Standards Committee for NWRA, developing and improving data collection and reporting procedures for NWRA members.

Goal IV: Collaborate with partners to promote an early childhood comprehensive system in Montana

Objective 1: The practitioner registry and professional development will be an integral part of the CCDF system for Montana Child Care Providers.

Objective 2: Educate the comprehensive system stakeholders about the goals of Child Care Development Funds and Montana's current state plan and increase understanding of how those goals fit into the larger system.

Objective 3: Convene the Career Development Advisory Board (CDAB) and its committees to guide operation and direction of the career development program and ECP

Objective 4: Actively participate on advisory groups and management teams to promote collaboration

Goal VI: Maintain MSU relationships and operate within MSU policies and procedures

Objective 1: Ensure MSU understands the mission of Early Childhood Family Support Division and ensure the mission of ECP align

Montana Early Childhood Project Policy Updates & Accomplishments:

Quarter 4:

System & Website Updates

Course and Event layouts are being updated. Madi Campbell, Professional Development Coordinator, created tutorial videos to help Professional Development Specialists navigate the changes. Automated emails set up to remind providers who have upcoming expiring CDA or First Aid credentials that they need to renew.

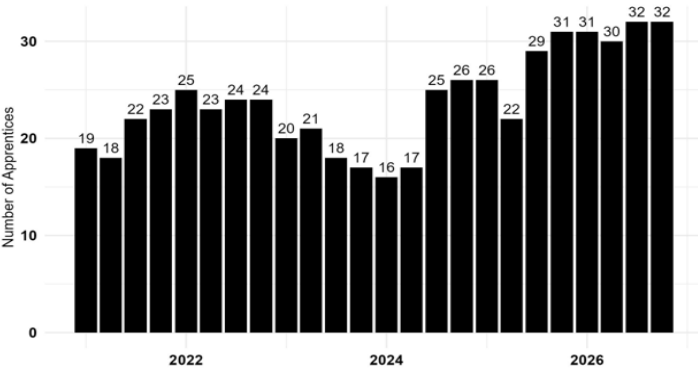
Policy Updates

CDA Council updated renewal policy so that candidates renewing a CDA Credential may now use a learning record or transcript from any state registry to document their required training hours. CDA Renewal Amnesia is also available until April 26, 2027. It allows expired CDA earners as far back as January 1, 2016 may be eligible to renew it through this limited-time program.

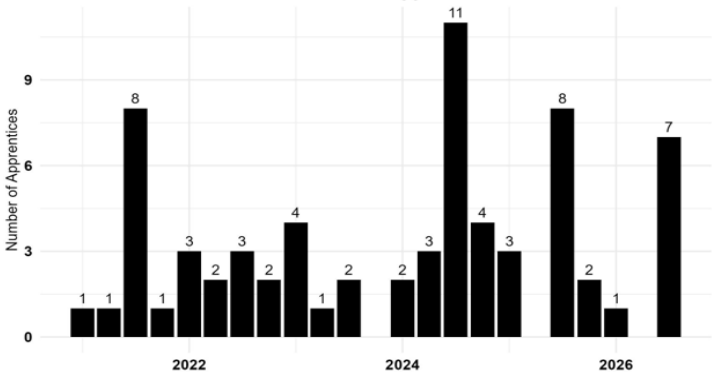
Conferences / In-Person Collaborations

Members of ECP team attended the Connect Business Summit at Fairmont Hot Springs in July, 2026. (<https://zerotofive.org/summit/>)
In August, Dawn Zimdars and Rhiannon Shook at DLI presented to SPARK MT about the CDA Registered Apprenticeship program.

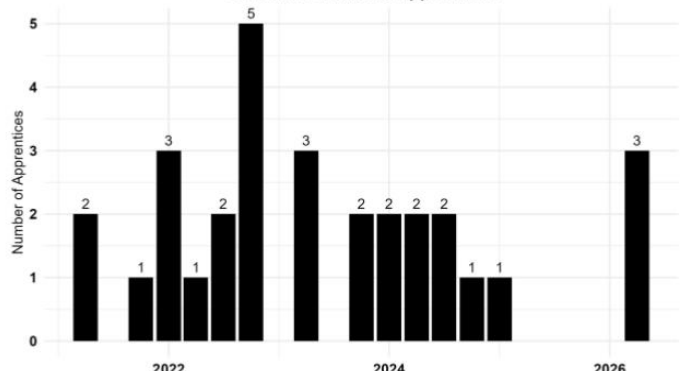
MT DLI Calculation of RAPIDs Data Extracted 10/01/2026
Active Childcare Apprentices



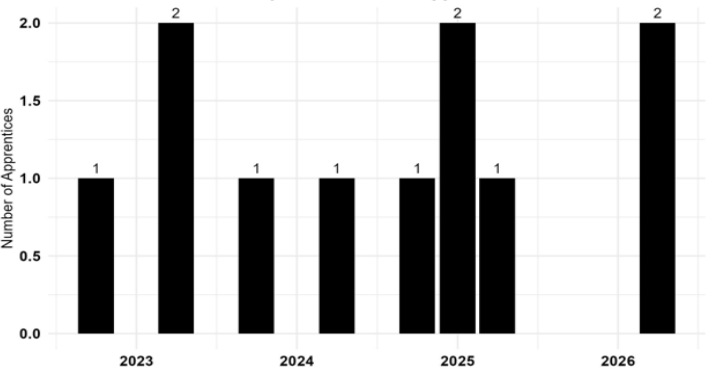
New Childcare Apprentices



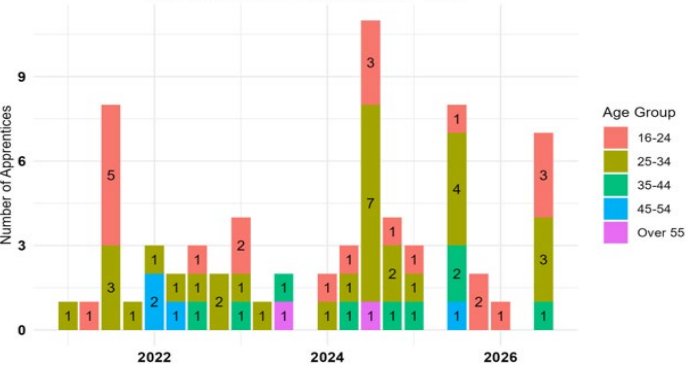
Cancelled Childcare Apprentices



Completed Childcare Apprentices



New Childcare Apprentices by Age Group



New Childcare Apprentices by Race

