



# **INJUINITY: CHILD CARE IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

By Carrie Spotted Bear &  
Shelby Whelan

# CARRIE SPOTTED BEAR

Tribal Policy Coordinator for Zero to Five Montana since October 2021

Enrolled member of the Blackfeet Tribe

My journey:

Head Start graduate, Browning High School graduate, Head Start parent volunteer, Child Care provider, Blackfeet Community College Graduate, Family Literacy Home Visitor/ Director, Child Care Director, Bachelor of Science MSU Bozeman, Master of Science in Education - Learning Development- MSU Northern



# SHELBY WHELAN

Enrolled member of the Potawatomi Tribe

Education: Bachelors in Psychology Minor in Family and Human Development

Background:

- Born and raised in Columbia Falls, MT
- Graduated from University of Montana
- Moved to Butte, MT

Position: Community Navigator





# CHILD CARE LANDSCAPE

## Accessibility

In Montana, ECE services are provided through a range of service delivery models and funding streams, including public, private, and blended service models. ECE capacity varies widely across the state; in general, Montana has an insufficient supply of ECE to meet demand. The state's licensed ECE capacity serves 44% of children ages 0-5 with all parents/caregivers in the workforce.

Capacity/access problems are worse for specific subpopulations and regions including:

- infants and toddlers
- rural communities
- tribal communities
- poorer communities
- families with children with special needs
- families with irregular work hours

# Tribal Child Care Program may choose to be state-licensed or not.

Tribes may set up their own licensing guidelines that may not be as strict as state licensing. However, each tribal child care does have health & safety standards that must be met. They follow fire safety guidelines, food safety, staff background checks, immunization, and outdoor safety checklist at the very minimum.



# DIFFERENCES: TRIBAL LICENSING AND STATE LICENSING

**Tribal license is determined by each reservation and may vary from one tribe to another.**

**However, most tribal licensing requirements are set up by Tribal CCDF Programs.**

**State Licensing has four different options:**

**Family/Friend/Neighbor  
Family  
Group  
Center**

# CCDF TRIBAL VS. STATEWIDE

*Child Care Development Fund is funded at the federal level to states and territories.*

## State of Montana

Source	Amount
Federal CCDF Block Grant	\$39,998,000

\*non-enrolled members or tribal members living off reservation

\*Best Beginnings Scholarship

## Montana Tribes

Source	Amount
GY 2021 Tribal Allocations Based on Appropriations - Montana (7 reservations)	\$11,373,777

\*Enrolled parent or child living on reservation

\*## Child Care or Block Grant



# PROPOSED CHANGES

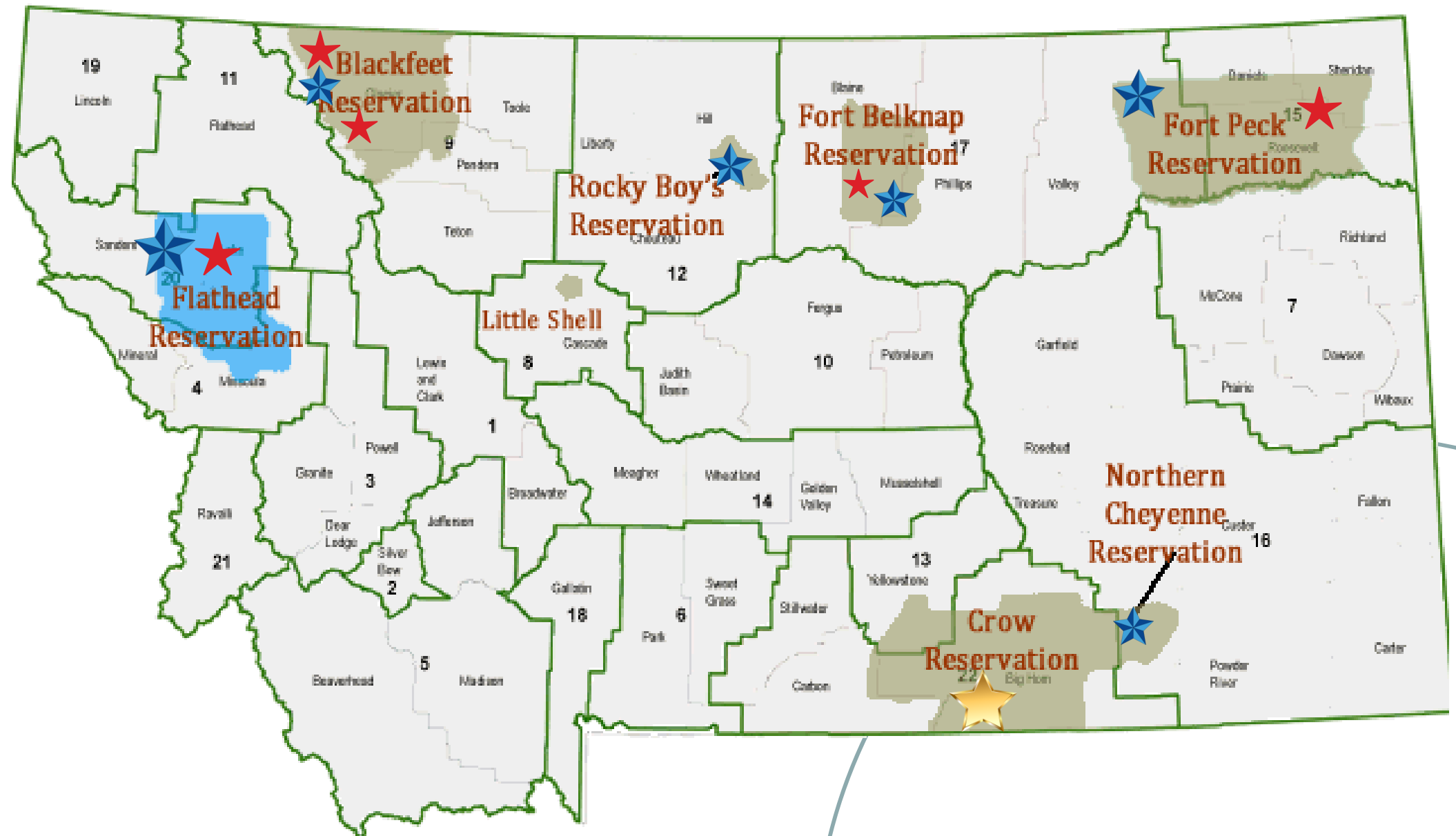
<b>prohibit Family Co-payments that are a barrier to Child Care</b>	<b>encourage faster eligibility - assume eligibility prior to full documentation and verification</b>	<b>extend construction and major renovation liquidation period - extend from 3 yrs to 5 yrs</b>
<b>Increase Tribal Flexibility to Waive Parent Co-payments</b>	<b>Simplify verification - use other public forms of eligibility to determine family eligibility</b>	
<b>Improve payment practices - make prespective payments to provider based on enrollment or equally stabilizing approach</b>	<b>minimize disruptions to families - implement eligivility policies and procedures</b>	
<b>Encourage paying the established subsidy rate.</b>	<b>Revise major renovation definition - changing threshold amount</b>	



# TRIBAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION

## Zero to Five Montana Tribal Language Pilot Grantees:

- ★ Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe Early Childhood Services- Pablo  
Blackfeet Early Childhood Center-Browning  
Browning Schools Child Care- Browning  
Fort Belknap Child Care- Fort Belknap  
Tiny Tots Child Care - Wolf Point
- ★ Tribal Head Start Programs that also implement tribal language into daily schedule



# COMMUNITY NAVIGATION WORK

***Overview: Montana Child Care Business Connect offers support to communities ready to address their child care challenges.***

## HOW DOES THAT WORK?

- One-on-one technical assistance
  - Data collection & analysis support
  - Project planning
  - Resources
  - Accountability partnership
  - Consultation (facilitation, partnerships, etc.)
- Community Child Care Capacity Building Cohort
  - Six month timeline
  - Process guidance from team to action plan
  - Shared network with cities across the state
  - Funding available

## CURRENT PARTNERS

- Blackfeet Nation
  - Glacier and Pondera County
- Crow Nation
  - Big Horn
  - Yellowstone





# COLLABORATION

## DEFINITIONS

- ▶ **Sovereign**  
A natural power to self-govern separate from the state or federal government using the tribal government body.
- ▶ **Tribal Government**  
Each tribe has a governing body to operate, enter into agreements, and develop and protect resources
- ▶ **Bordering Communities**  
communities surrounding or within tribal lands that are not associated with the tribe but may utilize similar resources

## WHEN TO CONTACT

Successful collaboration means all team members are well informed from beginning to conclusion.

## WHO TO CONTACT

- Planning department and/or economic development within local tribal government
- Native American Business Advisors (NABA)
- North American Development Corporation (NADC)
- Native American Community Development Corp. (NACDC)
- Tribal Child Care Development Fund Contacts
- Specific community members



# COLLABORATION

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO CONTACT



**In-person  
Connection**



**Tech  
Connection**



**Liste  
n**



**Consistenc  
y**



# SEVEN R'S FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

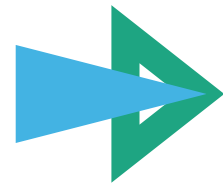




# RESPECT

All productive partnerships must be rooted in respect. In terms of tribal communities, non-indigenous people need to respect the cultural practices, knowledge and traditional ethics.

## ASK YOURSELF



**AM I CONSIDERING THE APPROACH OF TRIBAL TEAM MEMBERS EQUALLY TO NON-TRIBAL TEAM MEMBERS?**



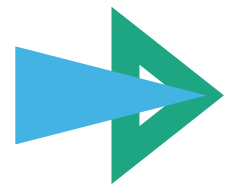


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## RELEVANCY

Many tribal members take a hands on or practical approach to learning and connecting with a topic. The relevancy of the local environment or teaching have a big impact on relationship building both with the team and the topic at hand.

### ASK YOURSELF



**HAVE YOU TRIED CONNECTING YOUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TOPICS WITH THE RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL TRIBE?**







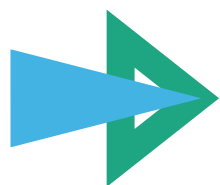
# RECIPROCITY

Partnerships and sharing of knowledge both in a human and environmental lens is a two way conversation. This idea can mean very different things to different tribes to

its important to listen and learn before acting. Tribes may value:

- Being heard and not spoken to
- Consultation on making decisions
- Traditional inclusion or an opportunity to share
- Material offerings

## ASK YOURSELF



**HAVE I ASKED A TRIBAL MEMBER HOW THEY LIKE TO BE INVITED TO THE TABLE AND WHAT MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT LOOKS LIKE FOR THEM?**



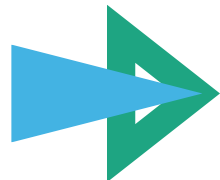


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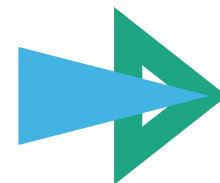
## RESPONSIBILITY

embracing a sense of mutual responsibility is a key feature to a partnership. from the beginning of the relationship discuss roles, assets to success and mutual goals. Create a space where teams members can come together for thoughtful discussions early in the process and often throughout.

### ASK YOURSELF



**HAVE I BEEN TRANSPARENT WITH THE PROGRESSION OF THE WORK WE'VE DONE?**



**HAVE WE IDENTIFIED ROLES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS GROUP SO THAT EVERYONE IS SATISFIED WITH THE SPEED AND QUALITY OF THE GROWTH?**



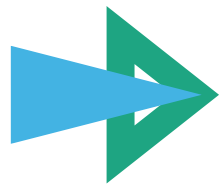


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# RIGHTS

Tribal nations are sovereign entities that and have a right to be at the table when decisions are being made that could impact their resources, people, and future. The history behind the relationship with the local, state, or federal government is important to understand before engagement so the team can be mindful of fears.

## ASK YOURSELF



**HAVE I CONSIDERED WHAT TRIBAL GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES OR DEPARTMENTS NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS DECISION?**

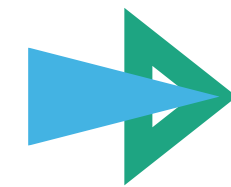




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# RECONCILIATION

Acknowledging painful histories or relationships and rebuilding trust is a pivotal piece of collaboration. Integrating sustainable partnerships into your work and including cultural traditions into your projects creates a more connective outcome.



## ASK YOURSELF

**AM I INTEGRATING NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE INTO MY PROJECT IN A THOUGHTFUL AND MEANINGFUL WAY?**



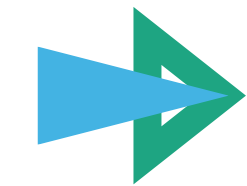


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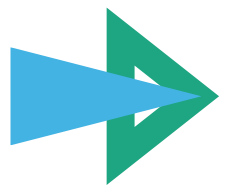
## RELATIONSHIPS

Creating relationships that stand the test of time you must put in considerable effort. This is a practice that is beneficial to all collaboration; non-tribal and tribal. however when done correctly tribal relationships can yield massive impact on the collaborative nature and sustainability of your project.

### ASK YOURSELF



**AM I VALUING THE TIME AND ENERGY OF ALL TEAM MEMBERS OR POTENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS?**

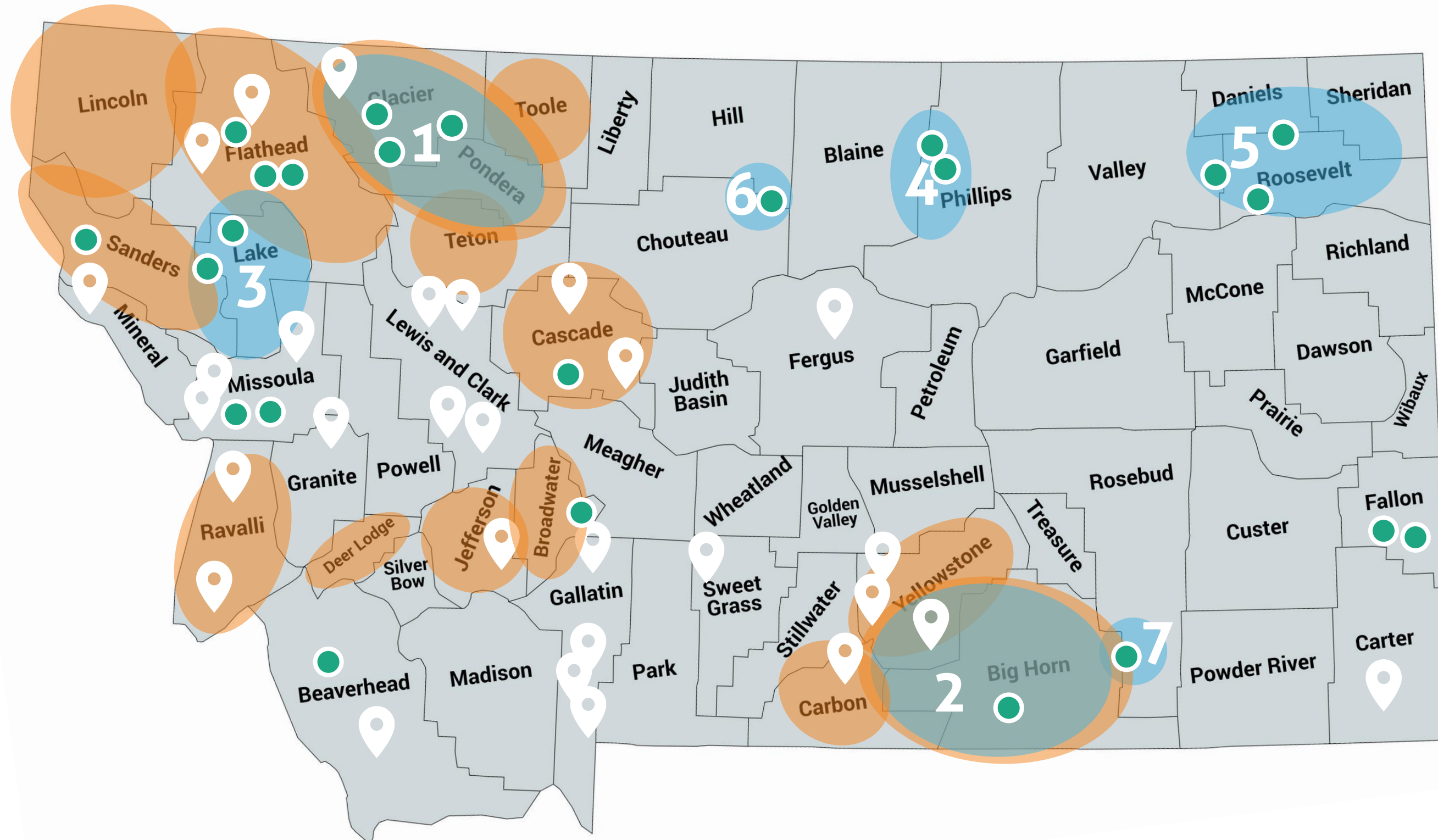


**HAVE I CONSIDERED HOW NATIVE CULTURE AND HISTORICAL PRACTICES CAN INFORM OUR PROJECTS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT?**





# PARTNERSHIPS



- Tribal Communities
  - Blackfeet Reservation
  - Crow Reservation
  - Flathead Reservation
  - Fort Belknap Reservation
  - Fort Peck Reservation
  - Rocky Boy's Reservation
  - Northern Cheyenne Reservation
- Cohort Participants
- Other Community Partners
  - Resource Partners
  - Community TA/T
  - Language immersion
  - Eastern Montana Engagement Partners
- Innovation Grantees



# CELEBRATIONS

Community Child Care Capacity Building Cohort #1

## BLACKFEET NATION

### TEAM LEAD:

DR. BRAD HALL

### LEAD ORGANIZATION:

BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### OVERVIEW:

The core team is conducting comprehensive data collection to hear from community members about their needs. The team is looking forward to seeing robust collaboration and partnerships between local child care providers.







# CELEBRATIONS

## INFANT/TODDLER TRIBAL LANGUAGE PILOT SITES & RESOURCES

### CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBE EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Trained 0-5 staff the language to preparing a tipi and as a group development a unit for classrooms to use around the tribal words of a tipi.





## BLACKFEET EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Purchased puppets to use to take into infant and toddler classrooms to introduce different tribal words to beginning speakers.







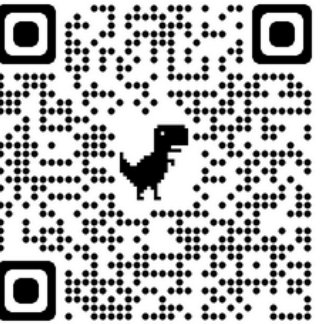



## BROWNING SCHOOLS CHILD CARE

Purchased equipment to record videos in order upload and make available to everyone. Also made picture books with Blackfeet pictures and words for toddlers.



# CONTACT SHEET

Planning department and/or economic development within local tribal government	Contacts found on individual tribal websites	
Native American Business Advisors (NABA)	Find individual tribal branches but visiting this website:	Website: 
North American Development Corporation (NADC)	Phone: 1 (406) 259-3804	Website: 
Native American Community Development Corp. (NACDC)	Phone: 1 (406) 338- 2992	Website: 
Tribal Child Care Development Fund Contacts	Contacts for all applicable states can be found at the QR code:	Info Doc: 

# Are you interested in being a part of child care innovation on tribal lands?

## Shelby Whelan

Montana Child Care Business Connect  
Community Navigator

**Shelbyw@zerotofive.org**

MONTANA CHILD CARE BUSINESS  
**CONNECT**

## Carrie Spotted Bear

Montana Early Childhood Tribal Policy Coordinator  
Zero to Five Montana

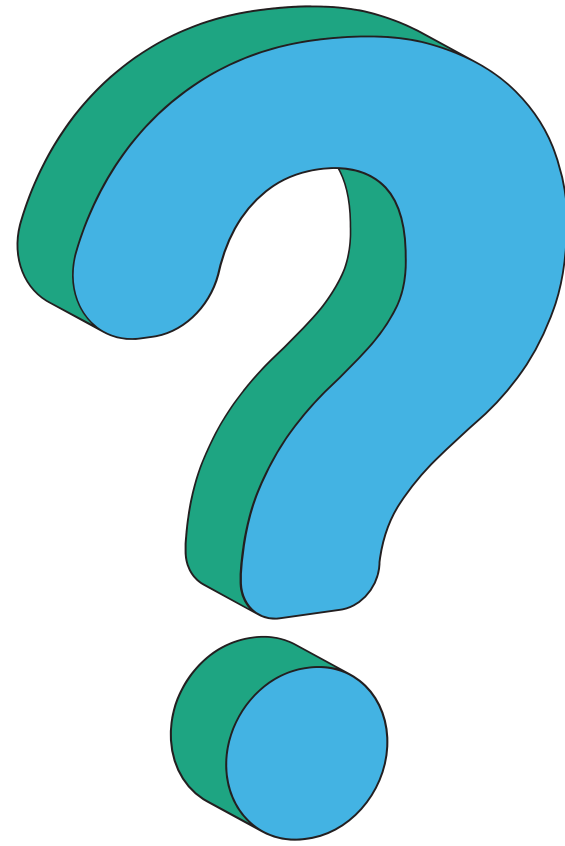
**Carries@zerotofive.org**

 **ZEROTOFIVE**  
MONTANA

**Contact Us!**







**QUESTIONS??**