



# NORTH DAKOTA PDG NEEDS ASSESSMENT: KEY FINDINGS

This evaluation was conducted to inform how to use its federal Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5). North Dakota sought to hear from parents, providers, and experts in the field of early childhood.

## What matters to families and providers...

The early childhood system **meeting the needs of children 0-5**

**Equitable access** to early childhood experiences, including through financial support

Low-cost, flexible, and in-depth **provider training opportunities**

For Native communities, a **holistic approach** to meeting both children's and families' needs

### **Vision:**

All children and families in all areas of North Dakota have access to quality early care in all program settings, supported by a well-aligned state system that is responsive to and supportive of both families and the early childhood workforce.

**Having a voice in changes** to the early childhood system

**Clear communication** with each other about children's care

**Fair wages and benefits** recognizing providers' important work

**Financial support**, like subsidies, to support provider businesses



**86%** of provider survey respondents **started in the field because they love the work and children**; 81% stay in the field for the same reason.

**52%** of providers say **higher pay would keep them in the field longer**. Only 10% said they stay in the field for the wages.

**76%** of providers say **low cost is important in deciding on a training**.

**40%** of providers feel “**not at all**” to “**somewhat prepared**” to respond to children’s difficult behaviors in a healthy way.

About **60%** of business owners and managers would like **more support on budgeting, finances and taxes**.

**23%** Less than a quarter of providers **currently use the Pyramid Model**, but many (37%) are interested in learning about it.

**93%** of providers **agreed or strongly agreed recent training was useful in their work**; 81% said it was affordable.

## Opportunities for ND and the PDG B-5 grant to support the system

- ✔ **Promoting career stability** and support for providers
- ✔ **Policies and funding to support adequate wages** while balancing affordability for families
- ✔ **Professional acknowledgement and appreciation** of providers
- ✔ **Opportunities for providers to collaborate**
- ✔ **Timely and quality early intervention and prevention services**
- ✔ **Initiatives like Bright and Early to improve quality**
- ✔ **Low-cost, varied, and in-depth training** for providers
- ✔ **Clear, proactive communication** and navigable resources for families and providers

## Recommendations



- 1** Improve communication about quality measures and standards.
- 2** Build more opportunities for people providing direct care to children to advance professionally.
- 3** Continue to infuse financial support into the sector to ensure child care providers are paid well and families can afford care.
- 4** Develop a broad communications plan across early child care professionals and families.
- 5** Move forward with implementing the Pyramid Model, increasing communication about what it is, and increasing education on how to use it to increase quality.