



ZERO TO FIVE
MONTANA

United Way
ZERO TO FIVE
Montana
Every child
in Montana
is supported
by
resources and supports
to thrive in school
and beyond

ADVOCACY 101
FOR CHILD CARE & COMMUNITY LEADERS
CONNECT SUMMIT
SEPTEMBER 2025

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS



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ZEROTOFIVE
MONTANA

WHO WE ARE

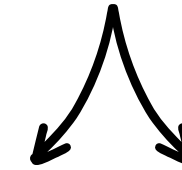
Our promise is to stabilize, innovate, and build the early childhood system in Montana so all families and communities can thrive.

MISSION

To work for our children, for our future.

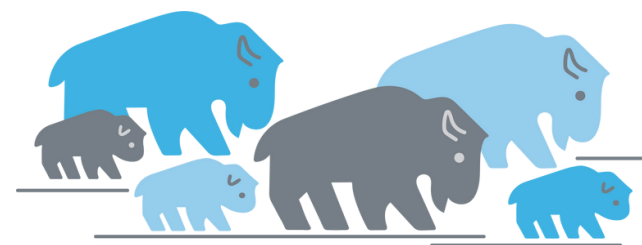
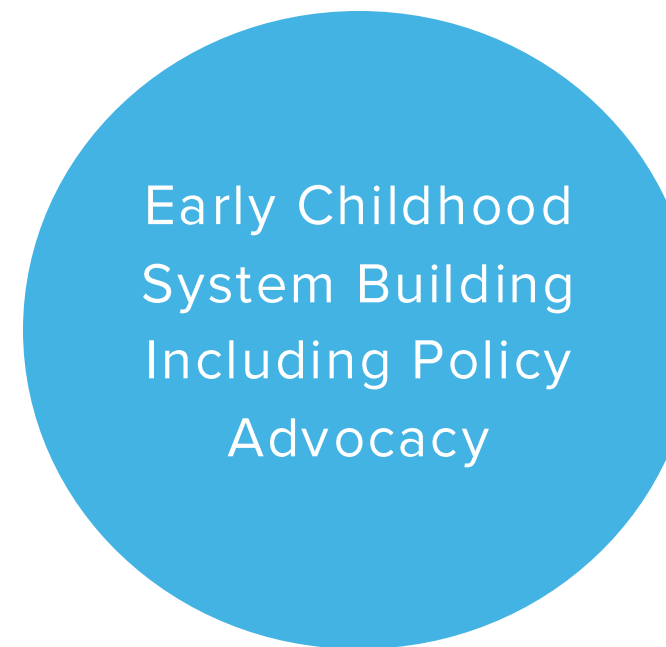
VISION

A Montana dedicated to every child.



POLICY

PROGRAM



MONTANA PARENT VOICE



Goals



Recognize the fundamentals of advocacy and its importance in creating change



Build the skills and confidence needed to actively participate in advocacy efforts



Feel confident sharing your story



ADVOCACY BASICS



Live Poll!

Menti.com

Code: 2747



3944





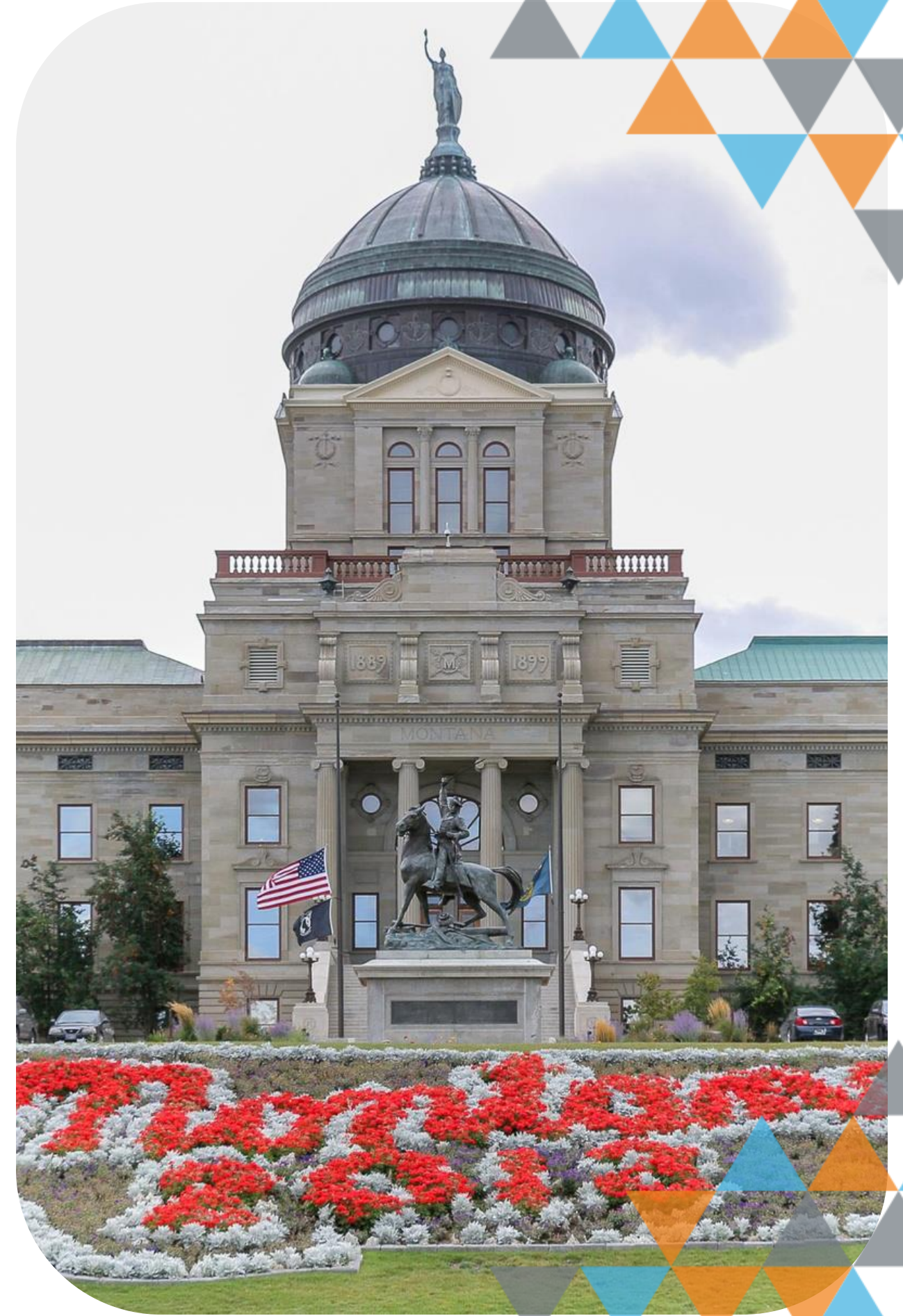
WHY ARE WE ADVOCATING?

Policymakers (elected officials, legislators, etc.) make decisions that affect every Montanan every day. It is important to understand how the government works and how you can influence decisions.



WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

**Taking action to
create change.**



TYPES OF ADVOCACY

Education

Grassroots

Lobbying



WHO ARE WE ADVOCATING TO?

LOCAL



**City/County
Council Members,
Sheriff, School
Board**

STATE

**Legislators,
Governor, state
agencies (e.g.,
DPHHS)**

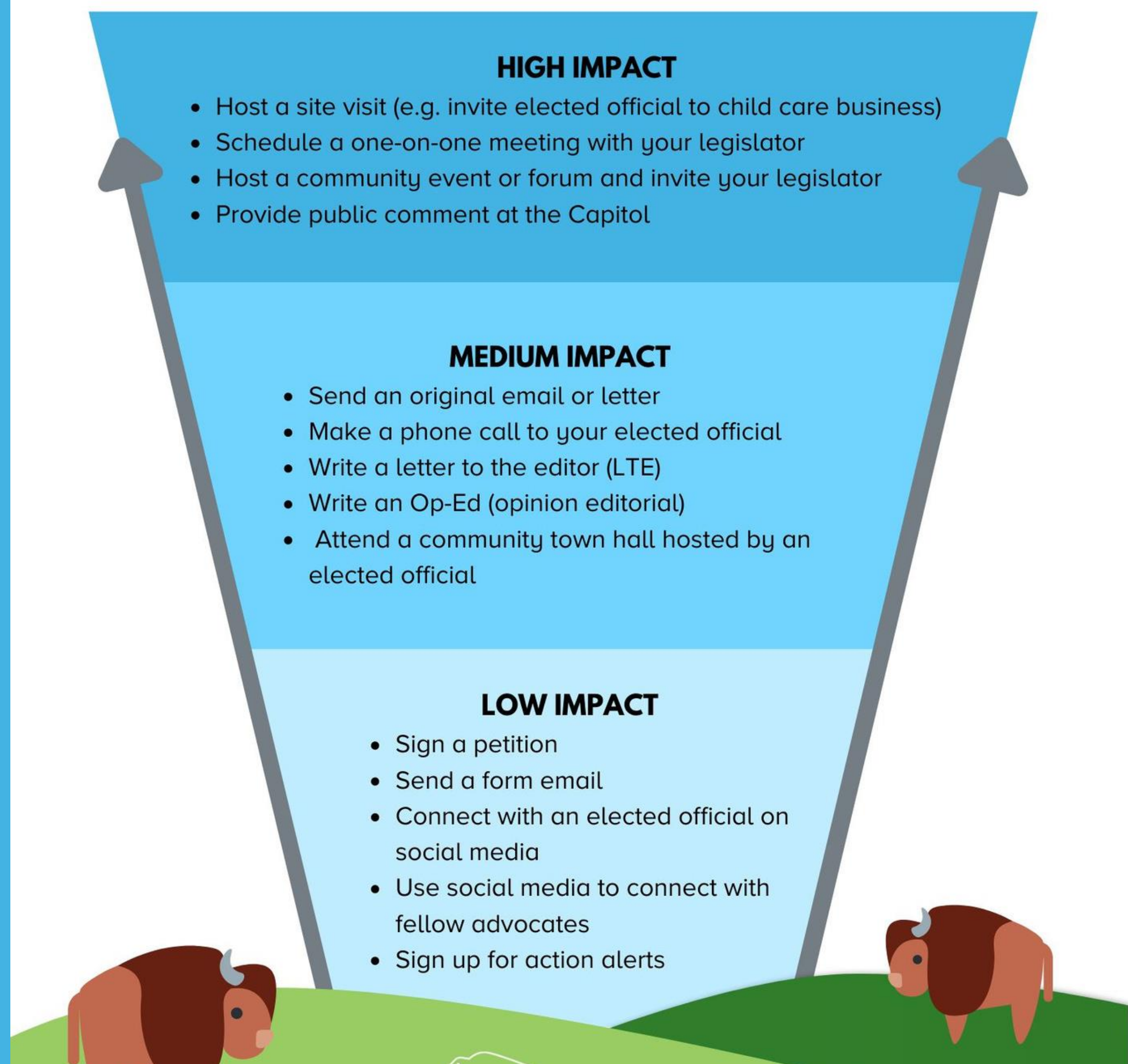
FEDERAL

**Senators and
Representatives
(Congress) and
federal agencies**



ADVOCACY ACTIONS

Spectrum of engagement



CONTACTING LEGISLATORS!

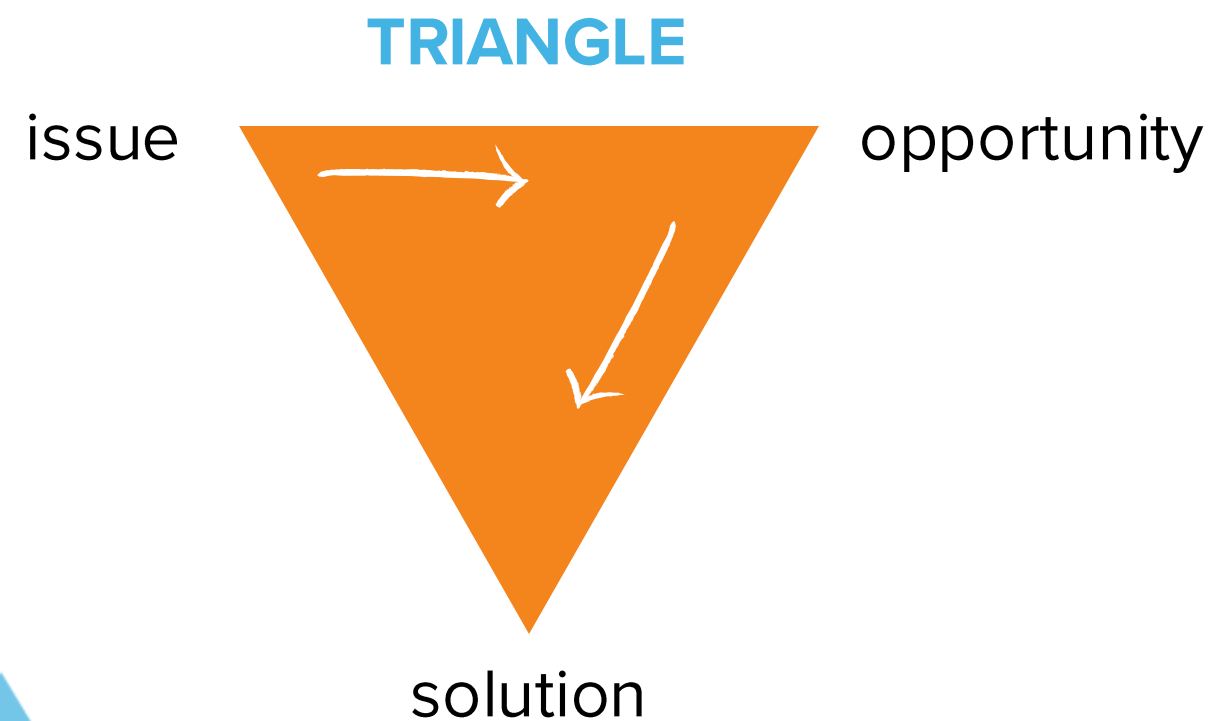
- **Email**
- **Phone**
- **Mail**
- **Fax**



SCAN ME



CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE



01

Select your issue

02

Gather data (could be personal story)

03

Identify solutions

04

Communicate effectively



WHY IS STORYTELLING IMPORTANT?

- Stories are **MUCH MORE** memorable than facts alone
- Policymakers want to hear stories
- You are an expert of your own stories and experiences

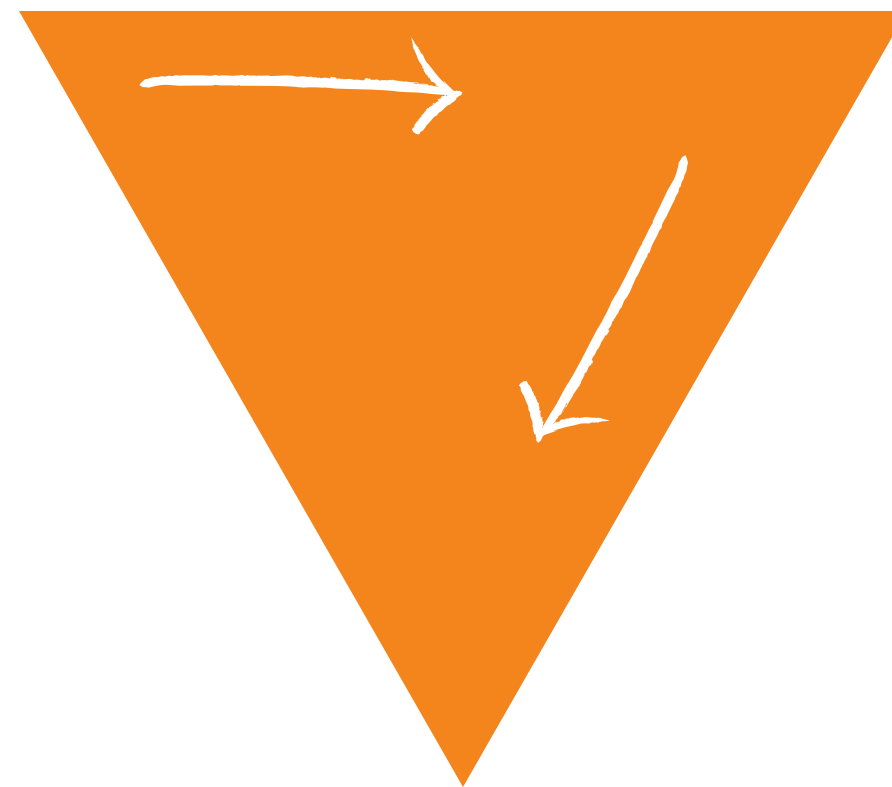


STORYTELLING

CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE

TRIANGLE

issue



opportunity

solution





Storytelling Activity!





Bringing Your Story to Life

***Now that you've crafted your
story, let's talk about it!***



RESOURCES



LEGISLATIVE VISIT Tools & Tips

Your legislators are people in the community. As their decisions are made, you need to hear from them. Make the most of your time there.

406-513-1115

MONTANA STATE GOVERNMENT

The Montana State Government is modeled after the federal government with three branches with specific powers to ensure one branch does not become too powerful. The three branches of the Montana State Government are the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch, and the Judicial Branch.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH State Legislature	EXECUTIVE BRANCH Headed by the Governor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Makes laws100 Representatives serving 2 years50 Senators serving 4 yearsElected within their district	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enforces and carries out lawsGovernor signs laws and can veto lawsElected every 4 years with a maximum of two terms (8 years)

A tribal government operates on each of Montana's seven Indian reservations; it reflects the tribe's sovereignty.

MONTANA LEGISLATURE

The 150 members in the Montana State Legislature are elected by the people, known as constituents, within their district. Each constituent elects one Senator and one Representative.

DISTRICTS
There are 100 House districts and 50 Senate districts. Districts are based on population, not area. The districts are determined every 10 years. A redistricting report is released. Each district must have about 100,000 people.

TERM LIMITS
Senators and House members may serve no more than two terms.

ELECTIONS
Senators serve four-year terms. Every two years half of the Senate members face re-election. Representatives serve two-year terms, and all vie for re-election before every new session.

SESSION
The Montana Legislature, which includes the House and Senate, meets in regular session for 90 working days in every odd-numbered year. Each session begins, or convenes, on the first Monday in January, unless it's New Year's Day, and typically ends, or adjourns, in late April.

1 www.zerotofive.org

ZEROTOFIVE MONTANA tip sheet

WRITING AN OP-ED (opinion editorial)

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- The best op-eds use a personal story to help the reader understand a systemic policy issue.
- Open with a strong narrative that gets the reader's attention. Close your piece with a specific call to action that emphasizes the importance of the issue, and names the decision-makers responsible.
- Op-Eds are between 500 and 800 words. Each newspaper usually states its specific requirements.
- Include your contact information.

WRITING PROMPTS

Why is this issue important to you?

What are 2-3 key points you want readers to know about the issue? What data support these points?

Point 1:
Supporting Data:

Point 2:
Supporting Data:

Point 3:
Supporting Data:

What is your call to action? Who is the local decision-maker with the power to enact your solution?

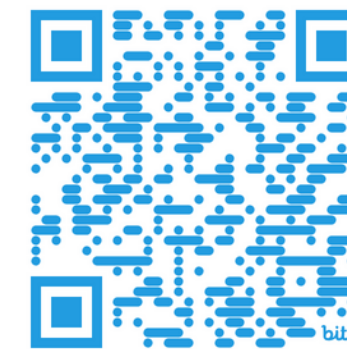
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During State Legislative Session

- Bill Tracking
- Weekly Updates
- Action Alerts
- 1:1 Assistance

WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH ZERO TO FIVE MONTANA NOW

- ✓ **Montana Early Childhood Network**
a growing movement including individuals, organizations, and coalitions working together to build a stronger, more connected early childhood system in our state.
- ✓ **Montana Parent Voice**
statewide parent advocacy network dedicated solely to increasing awareness related to critical early childhood issues in Montana. **@montanaparentvoice**
- ✓ **Advocacy Email List**
Join our advocacy list which will be utilized to inform individuals in Montana about ways to engage in early childhood advocacy. **<https://bit.ly/ztfmt-advocacy>**
- ✓ **Newsletter**
Sign up to receive our monthly newsletter:
bit.ly/ztf-news
- ✓ **Follow Us**
Follow us on socials! **@zerotofivemt**





QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Contact Information

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