

CONNECT SUMMIT AGENDA

JULY 28 & 29 | FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS

Tuesday, July 28

8 - 9 AM	BREAKFAST (PROVIDED), CHECK-IN AND VISIT EXHIBITORS ROOMS: Cutthroat, Grizzly
9 - 9:30 AM	WELCOME: SALLY TILLEMAN, DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa
9:30 - 10:45 AM	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: THE RIPPLE EFFECT: HOW EVERYDAY LEADERSHIP BUILDS STRONGER CHILDREN, FAMILIES, WORKPLACES, & COMMUNITIES KAREN LUM, K LUM CONSULTING ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa
10:45 - 11 AM	BREAK
11 AM - 12:30 PM	BREAKOUT SESSIONS (SEE FOLLOWING PAGE) ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa, Grizzly
12:30 - 1:30 PM	NETWORKING LUNCH (PROVIDED) ROOMS: Cutthroat, Grizzly
1:30 - 2:30 PM	BREAKOUT SESSIONS (SEE FOLLOWING PAGE) ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa, Grizzly
2:30 - 2:45 PM	BREAK
2:45 - 4:15 PM	GENERAL SESSION: LEAD WHERE YOU LIVE TRACY MCINTYRE, MONTANA COUNCIL OF COOPERATIVES ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa
4:15 - 4:45 PM	FEDERAL EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVOCACY: FIRST FIVE YEARS FUND ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa
4:45 - 5 PM	BREAK
5 - 7 PM	NETWORKING & EXHIBITOR SOCIAL - <i>All are invited!</i> ROOMS: Cutthroat, Grizzly

Learn about your presenters!



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Tuesday, July 28

11 AM -12:30 PM

From Hire to Inspire: Strengthening Professional Learning Systems

Kimberly Minckler & Caterina Jones (Child Care Training & Early Childhood Project) - Bitterroot

Not Just Caregivers — CEOs of Montana's Future

Melanie Sands-Snyder (7Gen Advisory) - Sapphire

Demonstrating Leadership Through Reflection and Self-Assessment

Kalli Decker & Tiffany Krushensky (Montana State University & MTAEYC) - Ponderosa

The Guidance Triad for Leaders

Barbara Otey (Discovery Developmental Center) - Grizzly

11 AM - 5 PM

**Professional Development Specialist Track: RBC Training
(pre-registration required) - Meadowlark**

1:30 - 2:30 PM

Leadership Styles that Support Employee Recruitment & Retention

Kendra Edlin (Zero to Five Montana) - Bitterroot

From Community Action to Systems Change: Lessons from Local Leaders

Shelby Whelan (Zero to Five Montana) - Sapphire

Leading for Quality: How Accreditation Strengthens Early Childhood Leadership

Tiffany Krushensky (Montana Association for the Education of Young Children) - Ponderosa

Early Childhood Advocacy

Callie Parr & Caitlin Jensen (Zero to Five Montana) - Grizzly

CONNECT SUMMIT

A G E N D A

Wednesday, July 29

7 - 8 AM

BREAKFAST (PROVIDED), CHECK-IN AND VISIT EXHIBITORS

ROOMS: Cutthroat, Grizzly

8 - 9:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (SEE FOLLOWING PAGE)

ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa, Grizzly

9:30 - 9:45 AM

BREAK

9:45 - 10:45 AM

GENERAL SESSION: YOU ARE BUILDERS - HOW CHILD CARE PROVIDERS SHAPE MONTANA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

Alex Dubois & Melissa Winger, Zero to Five Montana

ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa

10:45 - 11 AM

BREAK

11 AM - 12 PM

CLOSING SESSION: INSPIRING LEADERSHIP, NURTURING COMMUNITY

Join us for a fun closing session hosted by Sally Tilleman, DPHHS

ROOMS: Bitterroot, Sapphire, Ponderosa

Use our event hashtags:

#MTConnectSummit

#ConnectSummit2026

GET SOCIAL!



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Learn about your presenters!



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Wednesday, July 29

8 - 9:30 AM

Not Just a Paycheck: Building a Workplace Educators Stay for
Jeanette Lemieux (SPARK Montana) - Bitterroot

Babies Pay the Bills: Rethinking Infant - Toddler Care Through a Business Lens
Jason Nitschke (Zero to Five Montana) - Sapphire

Building a HOPE-Informed Community: Transforming Systems from the Inside Out
Ariella Wells (Bitterroot Early Learning Network) - Ponderosa

Expanding Capacity by Partnering with Head Start
Mark Douglass & Karen Filipovich (Montana Head Start) - Grizzly

8 AM - NOON

Professional Development Specialist Track: Adult Learning (pre-registration required)
Meadowlark

Thank You



This project is funded in whole or in part under a contract with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the department.