

## Project Abstract

Project Title: NJ Preschool Development Grant Birth through Age Five (PDG B-5)  
Applicant Name: New Jersey (NJ) Department of Children and Families (DCF)  
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Brief Description of Proposed Grant Project: New Jersey's PDG B-5 project is two-generational approach that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood (EC) system of care in addressing the physical, social-emotional, behavioral and cognitive aspects of child wellbeing and school readiness from prenatal (PN) through age five. NJ early childhood partners will build upon the strategic plan for NJ's Race To The Top Early Learning Challenge grant.

Needs to be Addressed: NJ parents/families with young children (PN-5), especially vulnerable, underserved families, will be better informed and have a stronger voice regarding EC services at the local and state levels. Families & caregivers will have easier access to high quality services (based on best practices) that are needed and desired (parent choice) to improve pregnancy-birth & child outcomes, promote early learning, eliminate disparities (health, educational, etc.), support parent & family wellbeing (including fathers), and strengthen local communities.

Proposed Services: NJ's PDG B-5 includes leadership across five state departments and collaboration with EC partners of the NJ Council for Young Children (state council) to: a) revise and refine the *NJ Plan* based upon an expedited needs assessment/planning process; b) support further development of Central Intake Hubs (with links to Community Health Workers) to facilitate easier access for families and providers to: Parent/Child Health (including screening), Infant/EC Mental Health, Home Visiting, Early Head Start/Head Start, Child Care Referral (Center & Family Child Care), Preschool, Early Intervention, Family Support (e.g. public assistance, parenting classes, fatherhood, job training, etc.), or other needed health, educational or social services); c) support and develop County Councils for Young Children to strengthen local cross-sector EC relationships (including parents), improve parent leadership, and maximize parent choice & knowledge of available EC services and supports; d) expand best practices (e.g. EC training/technical assistance network) to reach more of NJ's existing mixed delivery system providers, e) continue quality improvement activities (e.g. participation in Grow NJ Kids-QRIS).

Population Groups to Be Served: Parents/families with young children, birth to age five, residing in New Jersey. PDG B-5 resources will help NJ reach communities where risks for infants and young children are highest due to poverty, social isolation, disabilities, educational inequities, health disparities, structural racism, cultural barriers, poor maternal/child health outcomes, and infant/early childhood developmental delays.