

# Building Bright Futures: Vermont's Vision for Early Childhood



Southeast Vermont  
Building Bright Futures

Chad Simmons  
Regional Coordinator



# Today's Program

- Building Bright Futures
- How are our children?
- Why Early Childhood matters
- VT's vision & action
- How we get there



# Building Bright Futures

- Vision:

“All VT children will be healthy & successful”
- One state council
- 12 regional councils



# Building Bright Futures

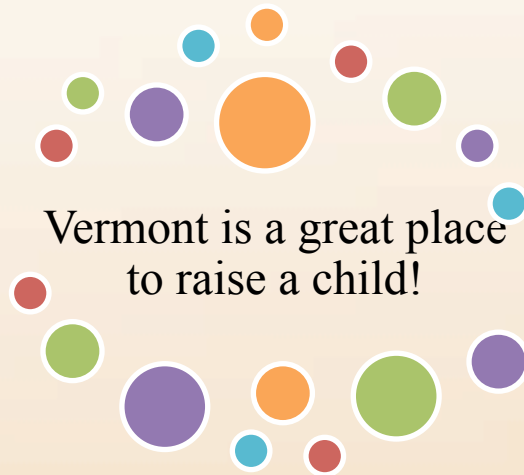


# **Southeast Vermont Building Bright Futures**

- Regional action
- Informs statewide efforts
- Quarterly events
- Direct Services



# How Are VT's Children?



- Ranks 1<sup>th</sup> in the country for access to education, economic, and community opportunities
- Ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation to have a baby

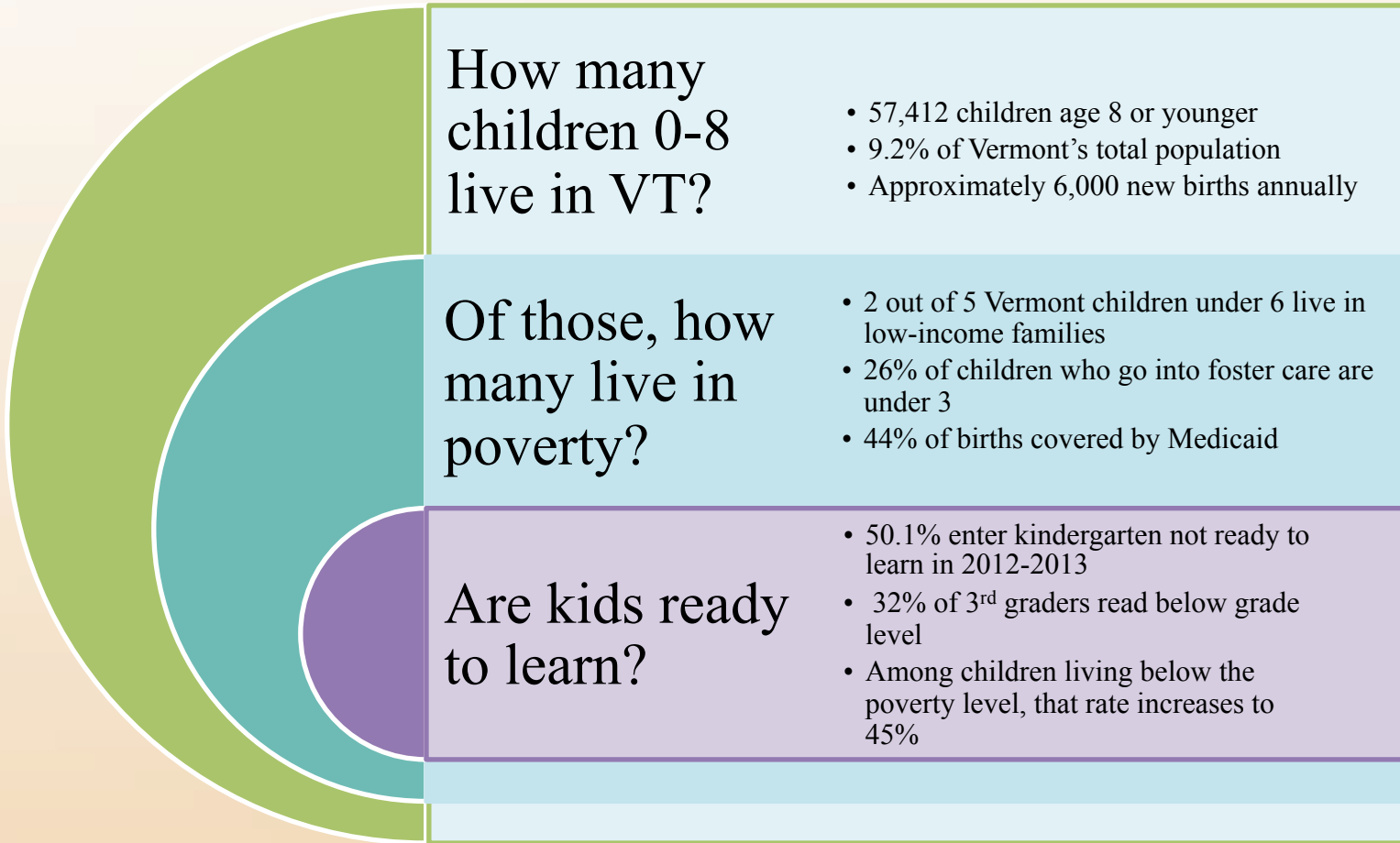


- Ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the country for afterschool programming



Sources: 2014 Afterschool Alliance America After 3 PM Report, Annie E. Casey 2014 KIDS COUNT Report, Opportunity Nation 2013 Opportunities Index, and 2014 Wallet Hub.

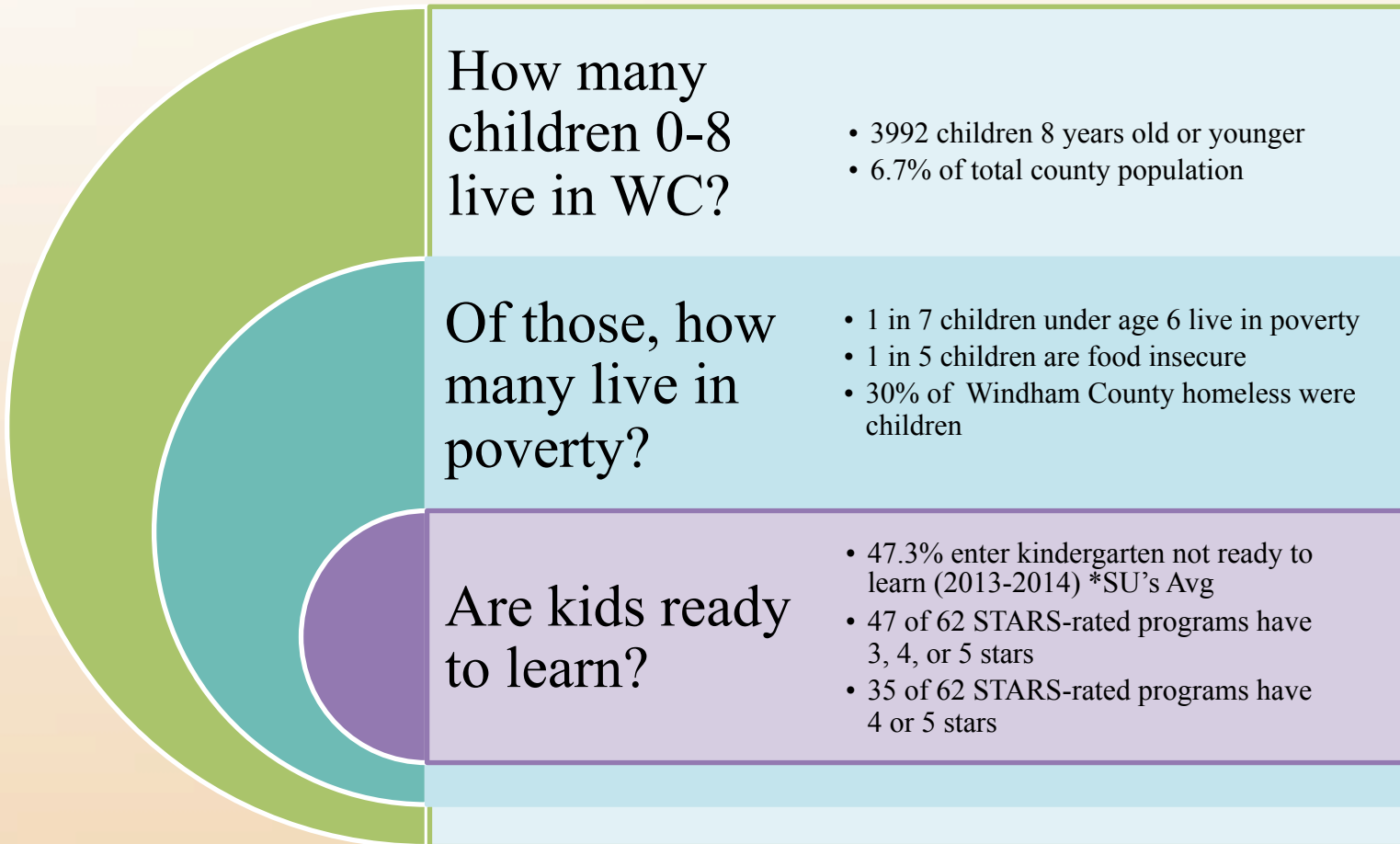
# How Are VT's Children?



Sources: 2013 VT Kindergarten Readiness Survey, 2014 How Are Vermont's Young Children?, Zero to Three State Baby Facts: Vermont (2013), BBF ECDRS.



# How Are Windham County's Children?



Sources: 2010 US Census data, United Way of Windham County, Hunger Free VT, Vermont Insights, VT Coalition to End Homelessness-2014 Point-in-Time Count, Agency of Education



# Why Early Childhood Matters

**90%**

**of a child's brain  
development  
happens  
before age 5**



- 90% Brain development before age 5
- 10% Brain development after age 5



*Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child*

# Conditions for Healthy Brain Development

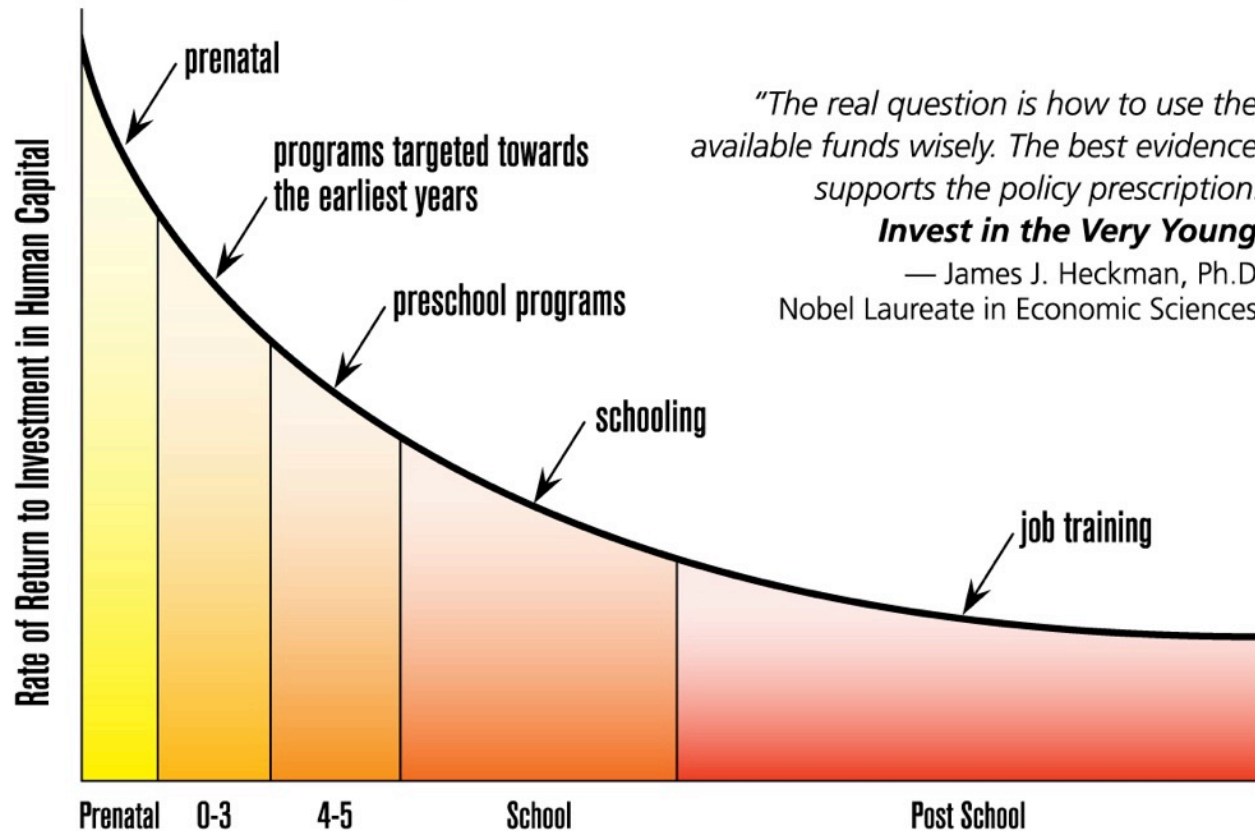
- **Relationships:** nurturing and responsive relationships with adult caregivers
- **Environment:** safe, healthy and stable
- **Interactions:** stimulating interactions & learning opportunities with adult caregivers
- **Food:** Good nutrition



# Why Early Childhood Matters



# Returns per Dollar Invested



*"The real question is how to use the available funds wisely. The best evidence supports the policy prescription: **Invest in the Very Young.**"*

— James J. Heckman, Ph.D.  
Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences

# Early experiences affect the quality of brain architecture

Without high-quality early childhood education, children are:

 **25%** More likely to drop out of school

 **40%** More likely to become a teen parent

 **50%** More likely to be placed in special ed

 **60%** Less likely to attend college

 **70%** More likely to be arrested

# Act 166: Universal Pre-Kindergrarten

ALL	10	Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3</li><li>• 4</li><li>• 5 year olds</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hours/ week</li><li>• 35 weeks/ yr</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High quality</li></ul>





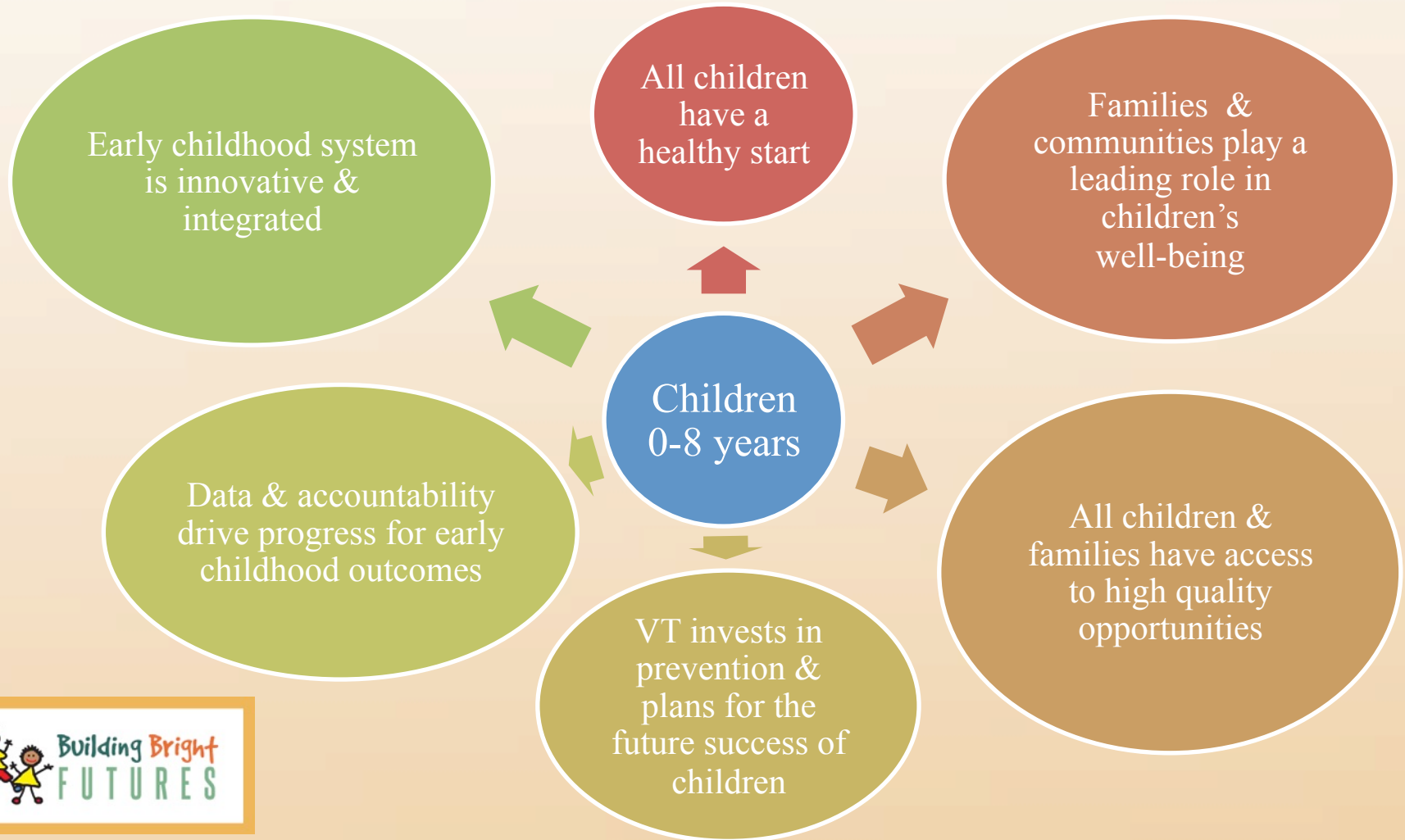
2014 Annual Meeting. Photo by WCCA



# Building An Early Childhood Framework



# VT's Early Childhood Action Plan



# Result 1: All children have a healthy start

- Ensure access to prenatal care, child health services, including preventive services and dental care, and support services for adults, including mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Ensure that all children have access to adequate nutrition at home, in early learning and development programs, at school, after school and during the summer



# **Result 2: Families & communities play a leading role in children's well being**

- Engage with families as their child's first and most important teacher
- Promote family-centered employment policies that support the physical and social emotional needs of children and their families



# **Result 3: All children & families have access to high-quality opportunities that meet their needs**

- Strengthen the quality of early childhood services throughout the early childhood system through a focus on alignment and best practices



# **Result 4: VT invests in prevention & plans for the future success of children**

- Increase the early childhood focus in health care payment reform efforts
- Increase public awareness about the importance for Vermont's of investing in children's early years



# **Result 5: Data & accountability drive progress in early childhood outcomes**

- Increase the knowledge, experience and application of Results-Based Accountability (RBA) as the accountability framework for the Early Childhood Action Plan
- Enhance data and the use of data to inform policy and practice



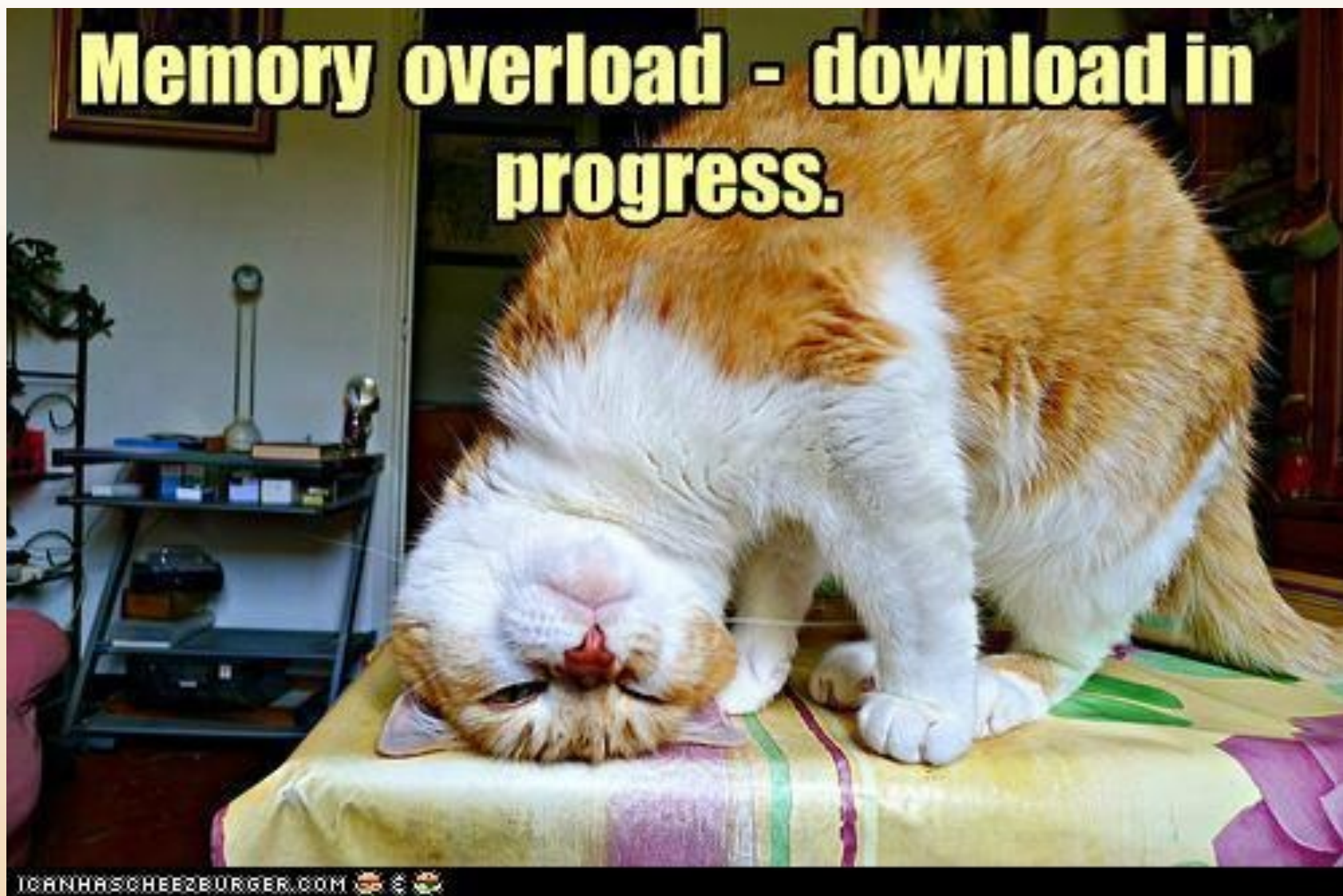


# **Result 6: The early childhood system is innovative & integrated across sectors in order to better serve children & families**

- Continue to develop, strengthen and align clear structures at the statewide level to ensure coordinated leadership and shared work
- Create a culture of collaboration at the state and local level that fosters systems-building across sectors



**Memory overload - download in progress.**



# How Do We Achieve These Results?

- Collaboration & leveraging opportunities
- Integration & policy change
- Early Learning Challenge
- Vermont Insights
- State & Regional Councils



# Vermont's Early Learning Challenge Grant

- Overall goal of grant:  
Improve school readiness  
for children with high needs
- Strengthens the systems that  
supports early learning and  
development
- \$36.9 million over four  
years



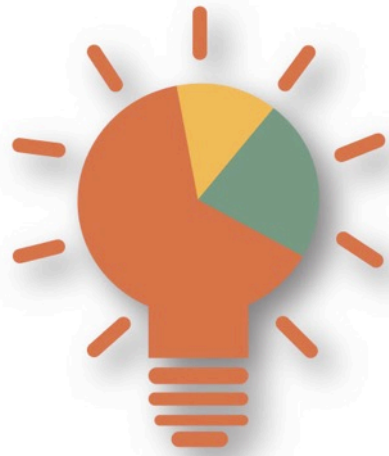
# Early Learning Challenge

## 4 Strategies

- Improving quality & access
- Investing in people
- Empowering communities
- Ensuring we make a difference







# VERMONT INSIGHTS

Communities Connected by Data



# Southeast Vermont Building Bright Futures



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- Monthly council meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 12:30-2:30pm @ Early Education Services
- Monthly e-newsletter
- Facebook