

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Save the Bay

100 Save the Bay Drive

Providence, RI

Agenda

Time	Agenda Item:	Lead
10:00-10:15	Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's 3rd Grade Reading Goal: B-Grade 3 System Building & Coordination (Ken) • Future of State & Federal Partnerships for Early Learning (Elizabeth) 	Ken Wagner, RIDE Elizabeth Burke Bryant, RI Kids Count
10:15 – 10:45	BrightStars Evaluation Findings & Next Steps	Karen Beese, DHS Kelly Maxwell, Child Trends
10:45 – 11:00	Opportunities to Support Young Learners in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Elizabeth Burke Bryant
11:00-11:15	Infant Mental Health: Findings from the Infant/Toddler Workforce Self-Assessment	Susan Dickstein, RIAIMH
11:15-11:35	Improving Access to Early Learning Programs for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McKinney-Vento, ESSA • CCDBG • Head Start 	Leanne Barrett, RI Kids Count Eileen Botelho, RIDE Karen Beese, DHS Aimee Mitchell, RI Head Start Association
11:35 – 11:45	Policy & Program Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for Infants and Toddlers in RI: Project Update • Other Updates? 	
11:45-11:55	Public Comment	Public Participants
11:55-12:00	Next Steps 2017 Early Learning Council Meetings March 22, 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Save the Bay June 28, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Save the Bay September 20, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Save the Bay December 13, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Save the Bay	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Ken Wagner

DRAFT

Rhode Island Early Learning Council

Recommendations Related to Early Learning

in the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

December 2016

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) highlights **early learning as a strategy to address education equity, eliminate disparities in student achievement, and support students' success in school.**

By incorporating the following policies into Rhode Island's ESSA plan, the state can:

- Advance the development of a coherent system of early learning from birth through third grade.
- Promote evidence-based approaches that support children to read at grade-level by the end of third grade.

Accountability System/State and Local Report Cards. Include accountability indicators in State and LEA report cards that reflect the importance of children's early years and the early grades. Specifically, state and local report cards should include measures of:

- Chronic absenteeism rates of children in grades PK-3.
- Suspension/expulsion rates of children in grades PK-3.
- Data on BrightStars quality ratings of early learning programs (both community-based and school-based) .
- % of children ages 3 through K entry receiving Child Outreach developmental screenings.
- % of children ages 3 through Grade 3 participating in and receiving special education services within general early childhood programs (inclusive settings).
- % of low-income 4-year-olds (up to 200% FPL) served by State Pre-K or Head Start (for state report card).
- Number of young children in foster care and young children experiencing homelessness (PK-Grade 3) and efforts to provide them with consistent, high-quality early learning opportunities.

Accountability System/Support & Improvement for Low Performing Schools. Promote investment in early education as an improvement strategy for low-performing schools:

- Use Title I funds to improve and **expand access to high-quality early childhood programs** (both community-based and school-based). The state should provide guidance on assessing the local early childhood landscape, model Memoranda of Understanding between districts and early childhood programs, requirements to participate in BrightStars, and strategies to improve the quality of early learning programs.
- Use Student Support and Enrichment Grants, 21st Century Community Learning Center grants and other supplemental grant funds to support **summer leaning for children ages 3 through Grade 3.**

Supporting Excellent Educators. Develop a **birth-to-eight professional development system** that ensures teachers and administrators have the skills and knowledge to support young children's learning. The State Plan should support and specify that Title II ESSA funds should be used to:

- Improve professionals' knowledge and application of appropriate developmental expectations of young children and the components of high quality birth-through-eight early learning environments.
- Include community-based birth-to-eight early educators in shared professional development opportunities.

- Develop principals and school leaders' knowledge of child development, high quality early learning and best practices in prekindergarten through third grade classrooms.
- Identify evidence-based strategies and resources for birth-to-eight professionals to support the social and emotional development of children.
- Use developmental and early learning standards that cross the range of domains for children from birth through third grade.

Supporting All Students. Ensure that young children learn in environments and through practices that are developmentally appropriate and support their success in school, including learning through play.

- Require LEAs to adopt **developmentally-appropriate instruction for use in PK through Grade 3** classrooms. Provide state guidance and technical assistance to districts to support implementation.
- Require LEAs to use **evidence-based family engagement strategies** to support children's learning and development in early childhood and the early grades. Provide state guidance and professional development, including strategies to engage families who speak languages other than English and families who are homeless or engaged with the foster care system.
- Require LEAs to **create transition plans** in collaboration with community stakeholders that create shared understanding among families, early childhood programs, and schools to support smooth transitions for children as they begin school and through the early grades. Provide state guidance, including model transition plans.
- Support and incentivize the use of the state's **Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP)** as a tool to inform kindergarten instruction, promote family engagement, and connect public schools to community-based early learning programs.

Supporting All Students. State and local plans should demonstrate a focus on **building early language and literacy skills in early childhood and the early grade:**

- Include the state's goal of ensuring at least **75% of third graders are reading on grade level by 2025.**
- Include **indicators of language and literacy progress** for children in PK through third grade as part of the accountability system so that struggling readers can be identified early and given intervention.
- Provide **professional development and coaching** focused on early language and literacy, social-emotional development, and high-quality interactions to early childhood educators in public schools and community-based programs. Language development is built on relationships and positive, nurturing, and enriching interactions
- Increase the percentage of PK-Grade 3 educators who hold a **reading specialist certificate.**
- Ensure that young **English Language Learners** have access to high-quality early literacy supports in early childhood and through PK to Grade 3.
- Create targeted **parent engagement** strategies and materials for families to support early language and literacy development at home.
- Disseminate funds through the **LEARN grants in ESSA** to community-based organizations working in partnerships with schools to support early language and literacy practices for children, families, teachers, and other school leaders.

Supporting All Students. Establish a clear, quantifiable and actionable goal as part of the state ESSA plan to **increase participation in high-quality preschool**, such as "By 2025, 75% of low-income 4-year-olds (defined as those in families with incomes up to 200% FPL) and 100% of high-risk 4-year-olds are in high-quality preschool (state PreK/Head Start)."

RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

December 14, 2016

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Save the Bay

EARLY LEARNING RI

Meeting Agenda

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Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Overview

BrightStars Evaluation Findings & Next Steps

Opportunities to Support Young Learners in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Infant Mental Health: Findings from the Infant/Toddler Workforce Self-Assessment

Improving Access to Early Learning Programs for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness

- McKinney-Vento, ESSA
- CCDBG
- Head Start

Policy & Program Updates

- Caring for Infants and Toddlers in RI: Project Update
- Other Updates?

Public Comment

Next Steps

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BrightStars Evaluation Findings & Next Steps

BrightStars Evaluation Findings

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- Upcoming Report!

Balancing Rating & Improvement in QRIS

The BrightStars Evaluation provides us with important data about the BrightStars Ratings for Child Care Centers and Preschools, and will assist in guiding future work.

As mentioned earlier, it's not just about Ratings, but the interaction between the BrightStars Ratings & Standards (the “R” in QRIS), and the Quality Improvement Supports that are available to help programs (the “I” in QRIS).

What is the right Balance?

BrightStars Ratings and Standards

There have been many proposals for future “R” work:

- Evaluate the FCC and School-Age Frameworks
- Review and/or Revise the BrightStars Standards
 - School-Age (2009)
 - Centers (2013)
 - Family Child Care (2013)
- Explore changes to the QRIS Model
- Review and/or Revise Measurement Policies & Practices

Program Quality Improvement Supports



- ❑ GED/Contextualized ESL Program
- ❑ Center for Early Learning Professionals
- ❑ RI Early Learning and Development Standards
- ❑ RI Child Care Facilities Fund
- ❑ RI Early Care & Education Training Program @CCRI
- ❑ T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program
- ❑ ERS Training & Support (BrightStars)

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Opportunities to Support Young Learners in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Early Learning in ESSA

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) highlights **early learning as a strategy to address education equity, eliminate disparities in student achievement, and support students' success in school.**

By incorporating the following policies into Rhode Island's ESSA plan, the state can:

- Advance the development of a coherent system of early learning from birth through third grade.
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Early Learning in ESSA - Recommendations

Accountability System/State and Local Report Cards. Include accountability indicators in State and LEA report cards that reflect the importance of children's early years and the early grades. Specifically, state and local report cards should include measures of:

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Early Learning in ESSA - Recommendations

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Early Learning in ESSA - Recommendations

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Early Learning in ESSA - Recommendations

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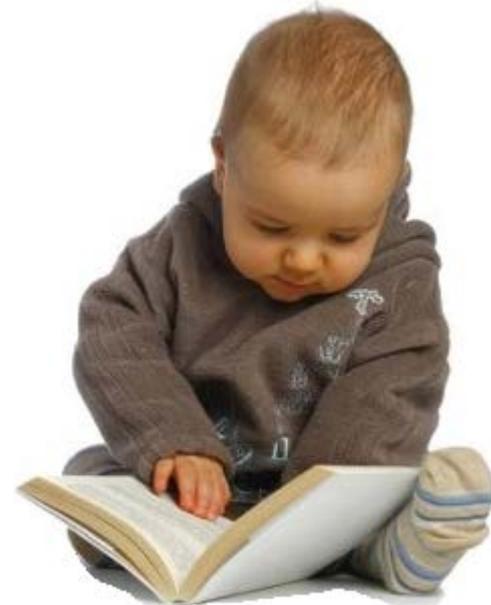
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Infant Mental Health: Findings from the Infant/Toddler Workforce Self-Assessment

Infant Mental Health: Celebrating babies and those who care for them!

The developing capacity of the child 0-5 years of age:

- to form close and secure relationships;
- to experience, manage, and express a full range of emotions;
- and to explore the environment and learn
- all in the context of family, community, and culture



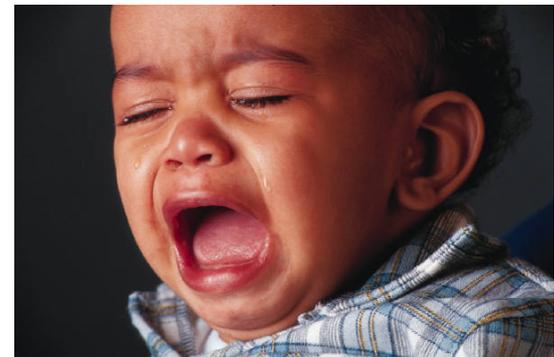
Infant Mental Health Perspective: What about the baby?



- The birth of a baby offers the hopefulness of a new relationship, growth and change
- A baby always has something to say
- A baby remembers the earliest relationship experiences

Infant Mental Health Principles: Early Experiences Matter

- **In the first 1000 days the foundation for the future is laid**
- Baby's brains take it ALL in...
- Family stress and toxic caregiving environments impact the baby's nervous system and stress hormone systems that can damage developing brain architecture and lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and physical/mental health (Shonkoff, 2016).
- Babies are good at showing us when they are suffering...



Breaking the Cycle of Adversity

Creating the right conditions for infant and early childhood development is critical to prevent the need to address problems later on.

Science of “serve and return” is clear:



Babies REQUIRE
Positive, Nurturing, Committed
Relationships
to thrive

Infant Mental Health-Informed Work: It's Everybody's Business!

- Thorough understanding of IMH principles is crucial
 - ▣ to guide ALL work that involves infants' optimal development and social/emotional well being
 - ▣ at ALL levels of focus: Promotion, Prevention, Intervention
- IMH principles apply for work in early care & education, home visiting, early intervention, health care (pediatrics, nursing, psychiatry), behavioral health care, child welfare/foster care/courts, etc.—whenever a baby is involved.

Infant/Family Workforce Skills Gaps

Despite evidence suggesting the critical impact of relationships on healthy outcomes, we face substantial challenges in building, training, and sustaining a skilled infant/family workforce that is well versed in “relational health”

(Shonkoff, 2016; IOM’s Transforming the Workforce 0-8, 2015)

It’s challenging to truly listen to a family’s story...and to keep the baby in mind.

*When the workforce is not supported, program quality suffers...
and our most vulnerable infants, toddlers, and families suffer*

RI-IMH Professional Competencies[®]

Area of Expertise:	As Demonstrated by:
1. Theoretical Foundations	Working knowledge of important theoretical foundations
2. Law, Regulation, Agency Policy	Understanding of implications of laws and regulations
3. Systems Expertise	Understanding of human service delivery system, impact on infants, young children and families, ability to navigate those relevant systems
4. Direct Service Skills	Observation and listening; screening and assessment; responding with empathy; treatment planning; advocacy, etc.
5. Working with Others	Ability to build and maintain relationships as the foundation of working in the field, as well as mentoring, collaborating and resolving conflict
6. Communicating	Active listening, speaking effectively, writing clearly
7. Critical Thinking	Analyze information, exercise sound judgment, maintain perspective, etc.
8. Reflection	Contemplation, curiosity, and self-awareness critical to process the emotional content of the work; understand the power of parallel process; effective use of supervision

RI-IMH Endorsement®



- An internationally recognized workforce development system that identifies standardized IMH competency requirements for infant/family professionals
- Informs and affirms each professional's specialized education, work experiences, trainings, and reflective supervision/consultation experiences
- Reflects RI's commitment to supporting a high quality workforce that integrates IMH practices in all programs that serve infants, toddlers and families.
- To date, over 1,700 people have earned IMH Endorsement® (5 in RI!)

RI Infant/Family Workforce Survey

- Purpose: Document the IMH knowledge and work experiences of RI's infant/family workforce.
- Better understand the needs for additional academic, professional development, and reflective practice opportunities that would support the diverse professionals who comprise the infant/family workforce in RI.

Survey

- 175 participants (64% response rate)
- 166 offered complete data
- 4 community-based social service agencies
- Electronic format
- Self assessment

Determining Endorsement® level

- Demographics
 - Current Role
 - Education
 - CDA (yes/no)
 - Certificate from I/TMH program (yes/no)
 - Years paid work experience
- Self Assessment of Endorsement Level: We offered descriptions of the 4 Endorsement® levels, and asked participants to decide which one most closely matched their experiences.
- **21 participants (13%) reported “not yet eligible”**

Perceived Levels of RI- IMH Endorsement® (n=145)

Level I: Infant Family Associate	17%	Caregivers who are in a position to strengthen the social-emotional development of infants/young children (2 years experience/AA or CDA)
Level II: Infant Family Specialist	50%	Providers who have primary focus on social-emotional needs of infants/young children with attention to the child's relationships (2 years post BA providing services that promote I/ECMH)
Level III: Infant Mental Health Specialist	23%	Providers whose role includes intervention or treatment of the child's primary caregiving relationships (2 years post grad supervised work providing culturally sensitive relationship focused I/ECMH services)
Level IV: Infant Mental Health Mentor	10%	Clinical/Policy/Research or Faculty

RI Workforce Training/Support

IMH Competency #1: Theoretical Foundations

	I Infant Family Associate n=25	II Infant Family Specialist n=72	III Infant Mental Health Specialist n=34	IV Infant Mental Health Mentor n=14	Average
Academic	46%	49%	57%	61%	53%
In-Service Training	60%	62%	61%	50%	58%
Paid Work Experience	46%	62%	61%	50%	55%
Receive RS/C	30%	37%	50%	31%	37%
Not Yet	6%	9%	8%	4%	7%

RI Workforce Training/Support

IMH Competency #8: Reflection

	I Infant Family Associate n=25	II Infant Family Specialist n=72	III Infant Mental Health Specialist n=34	IV Infant Mental Health Mentor n=14	Average
Academic	27%	30%	49%	39%	36%
In-Service Training	43%	34%	46%	42%	41%
Paid Work Experience	50%	73%	68%	56%	62%
Receive RS/C	37%	41%	55%	43%	44%
Not Yet	0	5%	10%	4%	5%

Raising a Collective Voice: Build a Bridge for Babies

- We need to narrow the knowledge and skills gap:
 - ▣ Increase community awareness of the importance of IMH principles and relationship-based practices in all programs serving vulnerable infants/toddlers and families
 - ▣ Offer relevant IMH resources/trainings/reflective practice supports aligned with IMH competencies
 - ▣ Establish coordinated systems that acknowledge specialized skills and competencies
- We need to work together across systems to support RI's infant/family workforce — our babies can't wait!

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Young Children & Homelessness



A person in the U.S. is most likely to experience homelessness in the **first year of life**.¹

A person is next most likely to experience homelessness at ages 1–5.¹

Almost half of children in shelter are under age 6.²

More than 150,000 very young children stay in shelters each year, and even more are sharing housing with others due to economic hardship.²



Homelessness during pregnancy and in the early years is **harmful to children's development**.³

Pregnant women experiencing homelessness are less likely to receive adequate prenatal care⁴ and their children are at increased risk for low birth weight.⁵

Ending Family Homelessness

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Areas for Action:

- Develop a **coordinated entry system** with the capacity to assess needs and connect families to **targeted prevention assistance** and **temporary shelter**
- Ensure interventions and assistance are tailored to the needs of families with children:
 - Provide **rapid re-housing** assistance
 - Increase access to **affordable housing**
 - Direct **service-intensive housing interventions** to highest need households
- Improve linkages to **mainstream systems** to help families gain access to resources (employment, benefits, child care, etc.)
- Use **evidence-based practices** to serve families experiencing and at risk of experiencing homelessness (e.g. trauma-informed services, early childhood home visiting and early childhood education)

Children Experiencing Homelessness & Early Childhood Programs

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Common enrollment/service barriers:

- ❑ Lack of awareness (hidden problem, difficult outreach)
- ❑ High mobility of families
- ❑ Transportation
- ❑ Lack of eligibility documents (health records, birth certificates, proof of income)

October 2016 Joint Policy Statement: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Education (available at www.earlylearningri.org)

October 2016 Crosswalk of Relevant Preschool, Head Start, and Child Care Regulations: National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Crosswalk (available at www.earlylearningri.org)

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act's

(Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program)

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- Originally passed in 1987.
- Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
 - ▣ ESSA Amendments take effect October 1, 2016.
- Works hand-in-hand with Title IA and other federal education programs.
- \$85 million authorized funding to SEAs.
 - ▣ Largest percentage increase of all federal education programs.
 - ▣ SEAs award competitive subgrants to LEAs.

The McKinney-Vento Act

amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

Provides students experiencing homelessness with protections and services to ensure they can enroll in and attend school...(ensures they remain in school of origin, provides transportation, removes barriers)

The amendments to the McKinney-Vento Act (in red) went into effect on **October 1, 2016**

- ESSA State plans must describe procedures to ensure that preschoolers experiencing homelessness have access to public preschool programs administered by the State educational agency or local educational agency.

The McKinney-Vento Act

amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

School of origin is the school attended when permanently housed or school in which last enrolled, including a preschool. 11432(g)(3)(I); Guidance N4; Fed. Data Guide

- ❑ Publicly-funded program for children 0-5 for which the LEA is a financial or administrative agent, or is accountable for providing early childhood education.
- ❑ Preschools operated, administered or funded by an LEA, including those funded by Title I or similar government grants.
- ❑ Head Start program receiving LEA funding or for which the LEA is the grant recipient.
- ❑ Preschool special education.
- ❑ LEA funded or administered home-based early childhood services.

The McKinney-Vento Act

amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

Transportation:

- ▣ LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school/preschool of origin, including until the end of the year when the student **obtains permanent housing**, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).
- ▣ If staying in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin.
- ▣ If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.

The McKinney-Vento Act

amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

Enrollment in Preschool:

- State McKinney-Vento plans must describe procedures that ensure that homeless children have access to public preschool programs administered by the SEA or LEAs.

11432(g)(1)(F)(i)

- Preschools are included in the school of origin definition.

11432(g)(3)(I)

- Liaisons must ensure access to Head Start, **early intervention (IDEA Part C)**, and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.

11432(g)(6)(A)(iii)

Child Care & Development Block Grant

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The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires:

- Procedures to permit enrollment of children experiencing homelessness prior to completion of all required documentation (including grace periods for compliance with immunization and other health and safety requirements)
- Training and technical assistance on identifying and serving homeless families
- Specific outreach to families experiencing homelessness.
- Coordination with programs working with children experiencing homelessness
- Lead Agencies to collect and report whether a CCDF family is experiencing homelessness

Child Care & Development Block Grant

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In September of 2016, the CCDBG Final Rule clarified:

- The definition of homeless to be consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act
- Children experiencing homelessness shall be given priority for services.
- Lead Agencies are required to coordinate with other relevant agencies to help families receiving services during a grace period comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements

Early Head Start & Head Start

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- EHS and HS have a **long standing commitment** to children and families experiencing homelessness.
- This commitment continued in the new HS regulations issued September 2016.
 - ▣ Annual **Community Needs Assessment** provides the road map for priority, outreach and recruitment efforts.
 - ▣ Children that are homeless are **categorically eligible** for EHS and HS, with increased flexibility for paperwork requirements.
 - ▣ Programs throughout the state have built **connections** with shelters and housing support programs.
 - ▣ Last year we **supported 100 kids and families** who reported a homelessness status to us.
 - ▣ When possible programs will arrange transportation and/or modify requirements in order to support families.

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State Policy & Program Updates

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Public Comment

2017 Council Calendar

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All 2017 Early Learning Council Meeting are
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Save the Bay

- March 22, 2017
- June 28, 2017
- September 20, 2017
- December 13, 2017