

# From NICUs to Child Care

Engaging Community Partners and Enhancing Services to Families



**2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE**





# 2023 OSEP Leadership and Project Directors' Conference



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*(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474)*

## Meet Team Maryland



Erin Simmons, Ed.S.  
Part C Coordinator  
Section Chief, Early Childhood Special  
Education  
Maryland State Department of Education

Brenda Hussey-Gardner, PhD, MPH  
Professor  
University of Maryland School of Medicine  
Chair of the MD State Interagency  
Coordinating Council



# Presentation Outline

1. MD's PRide Project
2. Connecting Families and Partners through Online referral
3. Connecting Families and Partners through Community Portal
4. Child Care Partnerships



# Maryland's PRIDE: PRemature Infant Developmental Enrichment



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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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# Disclosure: Funding Support for PRIDE

- Funding received from the Maryland State Department of Education, 1994-1996
- Funding received from the Baltimore City Health Department, 1996-Present
- Funding supports part of Dr. Hussey-Gardner's salary





## History

- Began in 1994
- Collaboration between UMSOM and BITP
- To provide a concerted effort of identification, evaluation, and service coordination for BITP eligible infants in UMCH NICU, and/or who attend UMCH NICU Follow-Up Program





## Current Team

- Program Director/ Developmental Specialist
  - Brenda Hussey-Gardner, PhD, MPH
- Service Coordinators
  - Melanie Miller, MEd
  - Jena Connors, BS





# Goals

1

**Expedite infant referral**

2

**Facilitate timely acquisition of EI services**

3

**Eliminate duplication of evaluations**

4

**Provide service coordination embedded within child's NICU and NICU Follow-Up care**



# Process



## NICU

- Attend multidisciplinary NICU rounds or collaborate with social worker
- Make referral near NICU discharge
- Conduct eligibility evaluation & develop IFSP



# Process



## NICU Follow-Up

- SC attends NICU Follow-Up with PRIDE families
- Baltimore City residents not in BITP, with newly identified concerns, referred to BITP at appointment, introduced to service coordinator, eligibility evaluation conducted in conjunction with appointment and IFSP written

# Process



## Home

- Provide ongoing service coordination inclusive of monthly developmental monitoring and anticipatory guidance

# Program Evaluation

*Maryland's PRIDE: Evaluation of an Early Intervention Program Embedded Within a NICU and NICU Follow-Up Program.*

Xiaofang,<sup>1</sup> Xiaoli<sup>1</sup>, Valentine<sup>2</sup>, Hussey-Gardner<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Maryland, Baltimore County;

<sup>2</sup>Baltimore City Health Department, <sup>3</sup>University of Maryland School of Medicine

Published in the Journal of Early Intervention online 6.23.23.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/10538151231179113>

- Compared children in BITP with PRIDE & without PRIDE
- Deidentified data obtained from BITP online database from 7/1/2008 to 6/30/2018
- Participants included all children born prematurely who received medical assistance
- Study reviewed by IRB at UMSOM & deemed not human subjects research necessitating consent



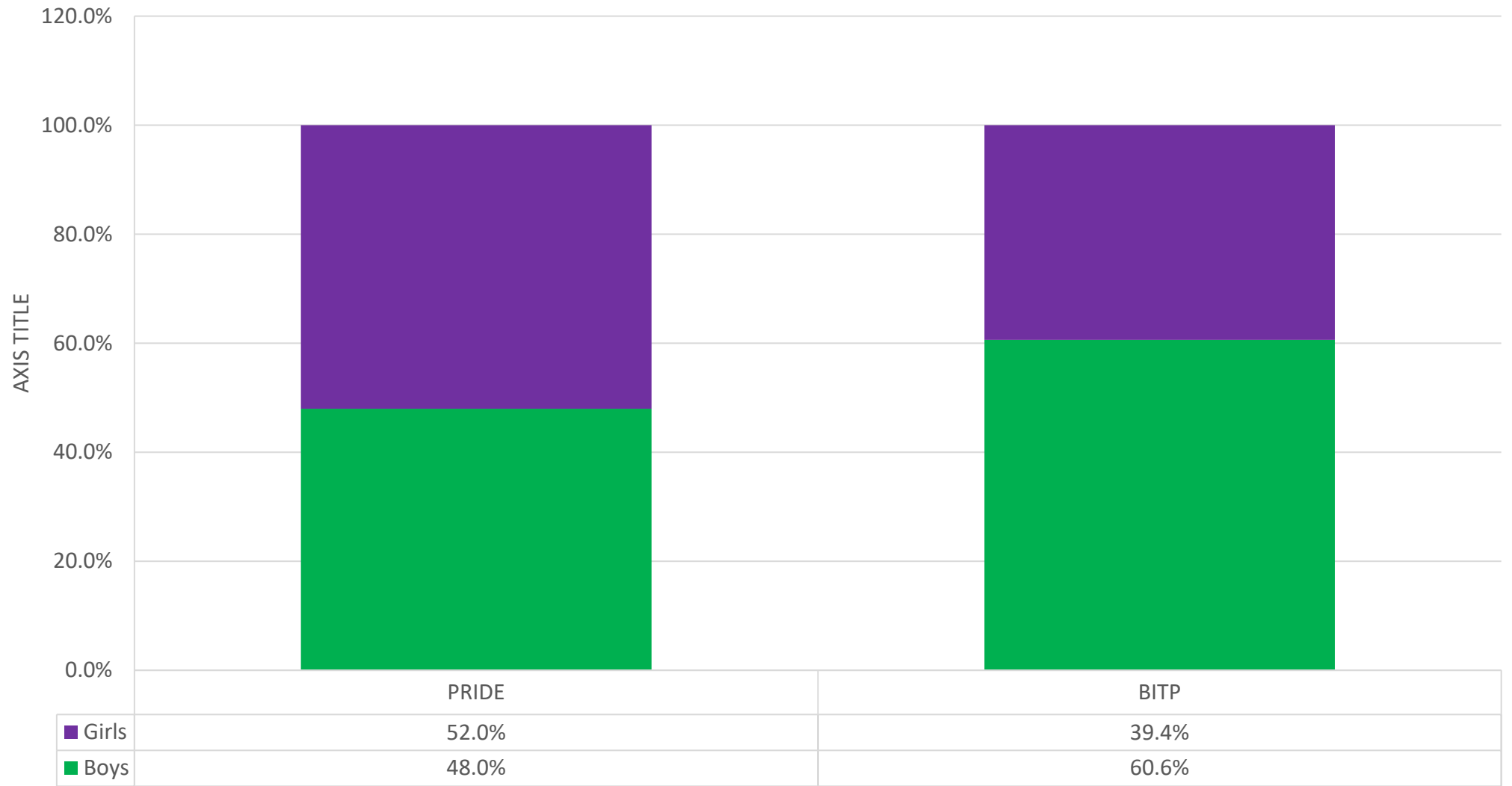
# Results

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

	PRIDE (n = 271)	BITP (n = 685)
	n (%) or M(SD)	
Gender		
Boys	130(48.0) <sup>b</sup>	415(60.6) <sup>a</sup>
Girls	141(52.0) <sup>a</sup>	270(39.4) <sup>b</sup>
Gestational age (week)	28.25(3.33) <sup>b</sup>	31.22(4.06) <sup>a</sup>
Source of referral		
Parent	5(1.8) <sup>b</sup>	371(54.2) <sup>a</sup>
Other/Professional	266(98.2) <sup>a</sup>	314(45.8) <sup>b</sup>
Age at referral (month)	6.54(6.49) <sup>b</sup>	14.57(10.43) <sup>a</sup>
Eligibility		
25% developmental delay	38(14.0) <sup>b</sup>	346(50.5) <sup>a</sup>
Atypical development	22(8.1)	43(6.3)
Diagnosed high probability condition	211(77.9) <sup>a</sup>	296(43.2) <sup>b</sup>
Length of stay in the program (days)	752.68(375.60) <sup>a</sup>	483.26(329.61) <sup>b</sup>
Status		
Active	30(11.1)	69(10.1)
Parent withdrawal	10(3.7) <sup>b</sup>	82(12.0) <sup>a</sup>
Attempts to contact were unsuccessful	66(24.4)	179(26.1)
Moved to another jurisdiction	28(10.3)	75(10.9)
Moved out of state	2(0.7)	15(2.2)
Completion of IFSP prior to reaching age 3	25(9.2)	72(10.5)
Eligible for IEP at age 3	110(40.6) <sup>a</sup>	193(28.2) <sup>b</sup>
Completion of IFSP after age 3	13(11.8)	29(15.0)
Transition at age 3	71(64.5) <sup>a</sup>	77(39.9) <sup>b</sup>
Transition after age 3	12(10.9)	29(15.0)
Transition beginning school year following 4th birthday	14(12.7) <sup>b</sup>	58(30.1) <sup>a</sup>



# Gender



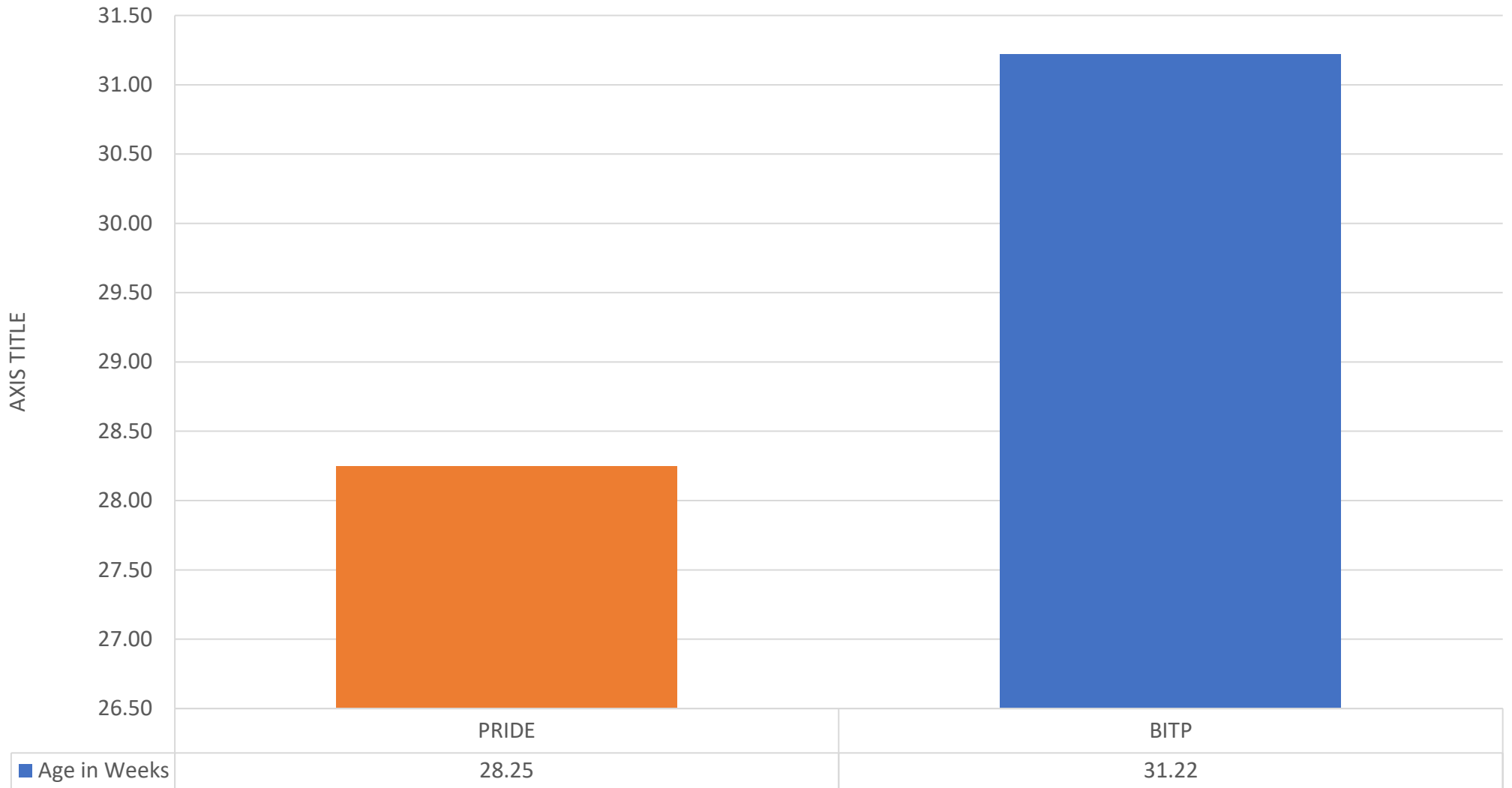
Results:



# Results

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

## Gestational Age at Birth

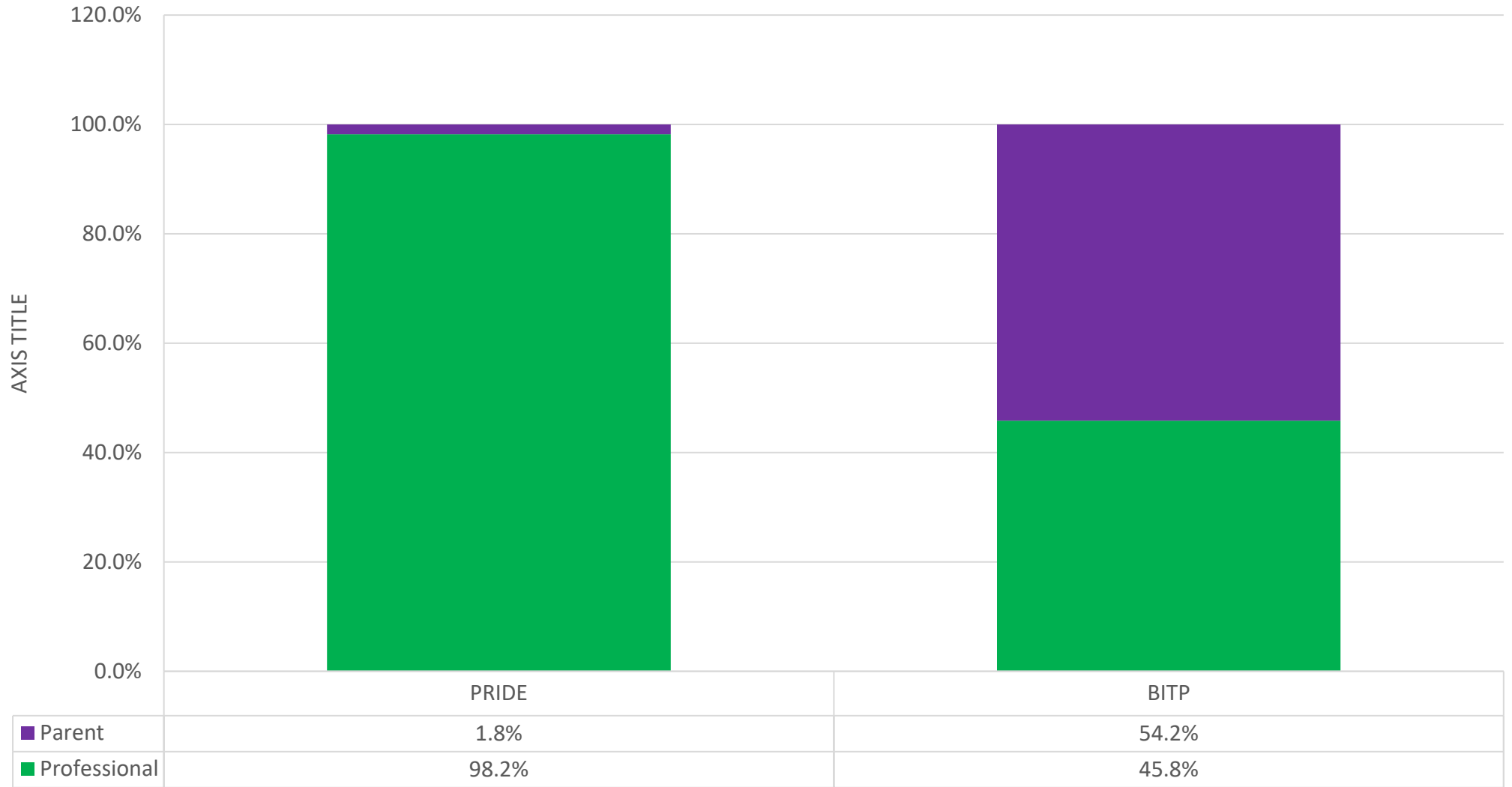




# Results: Referral Source

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

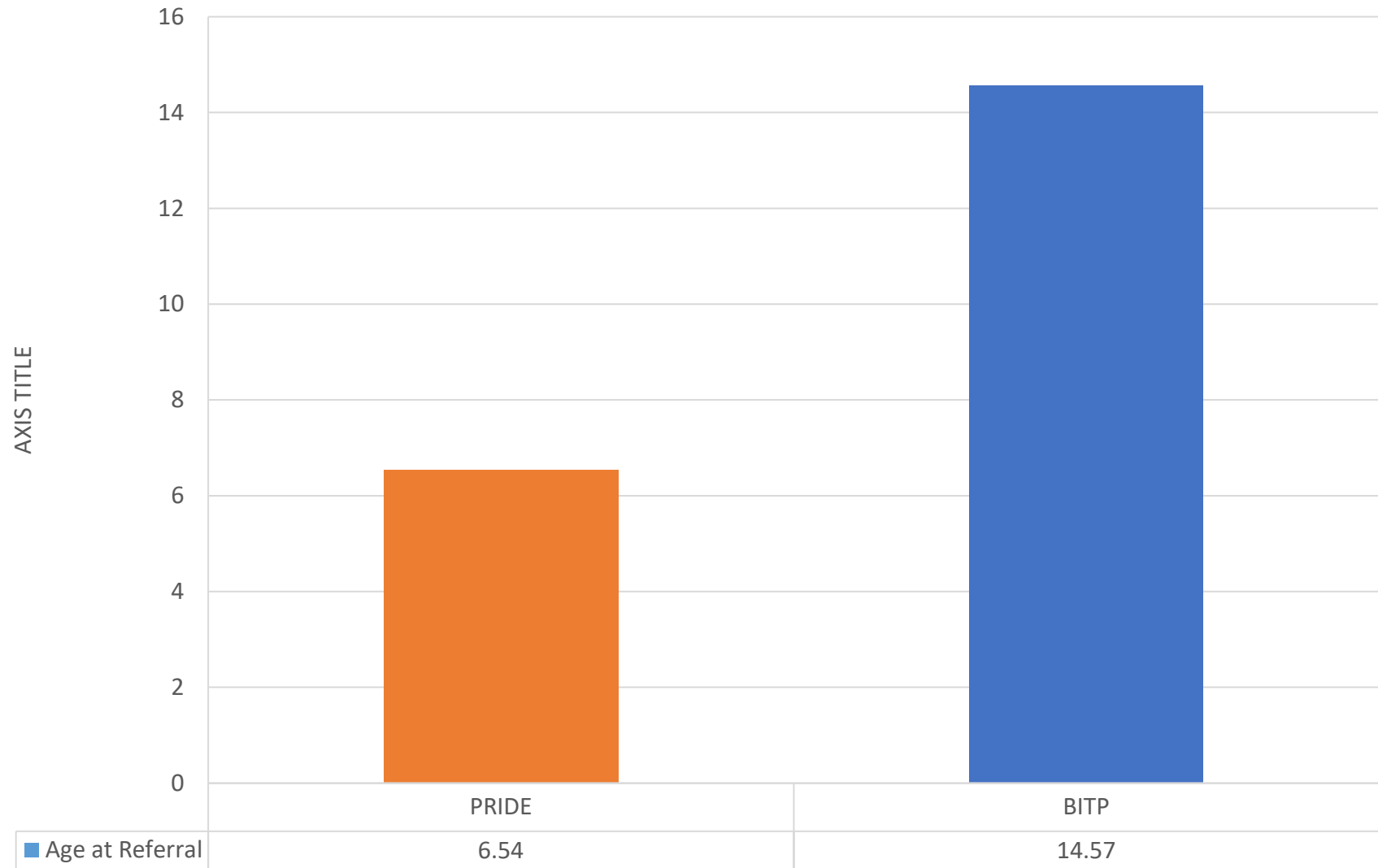
## Referral Source



# Results

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

## Age at Referral

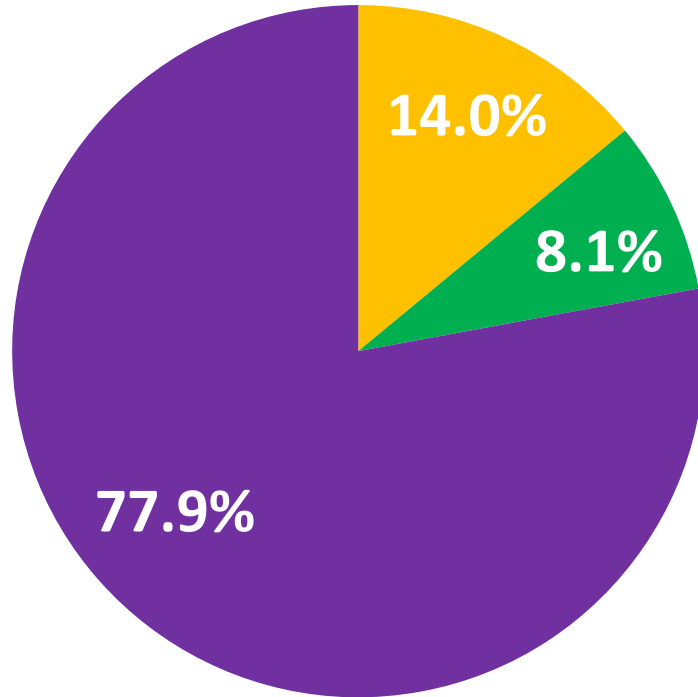


# Results

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

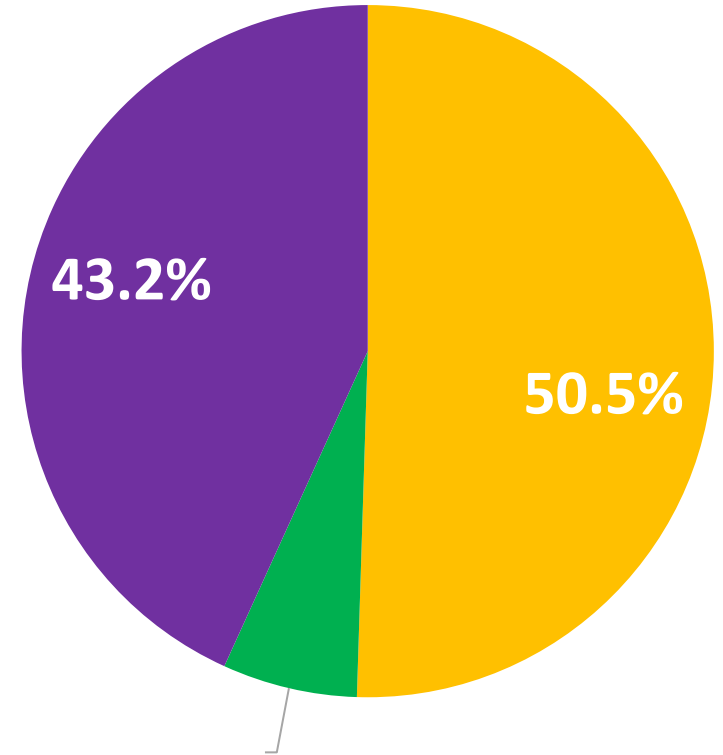
## PRIDE Eligibility

■ 25% Delay ■ Atypical ■ High Prob



## BITP Eligibility

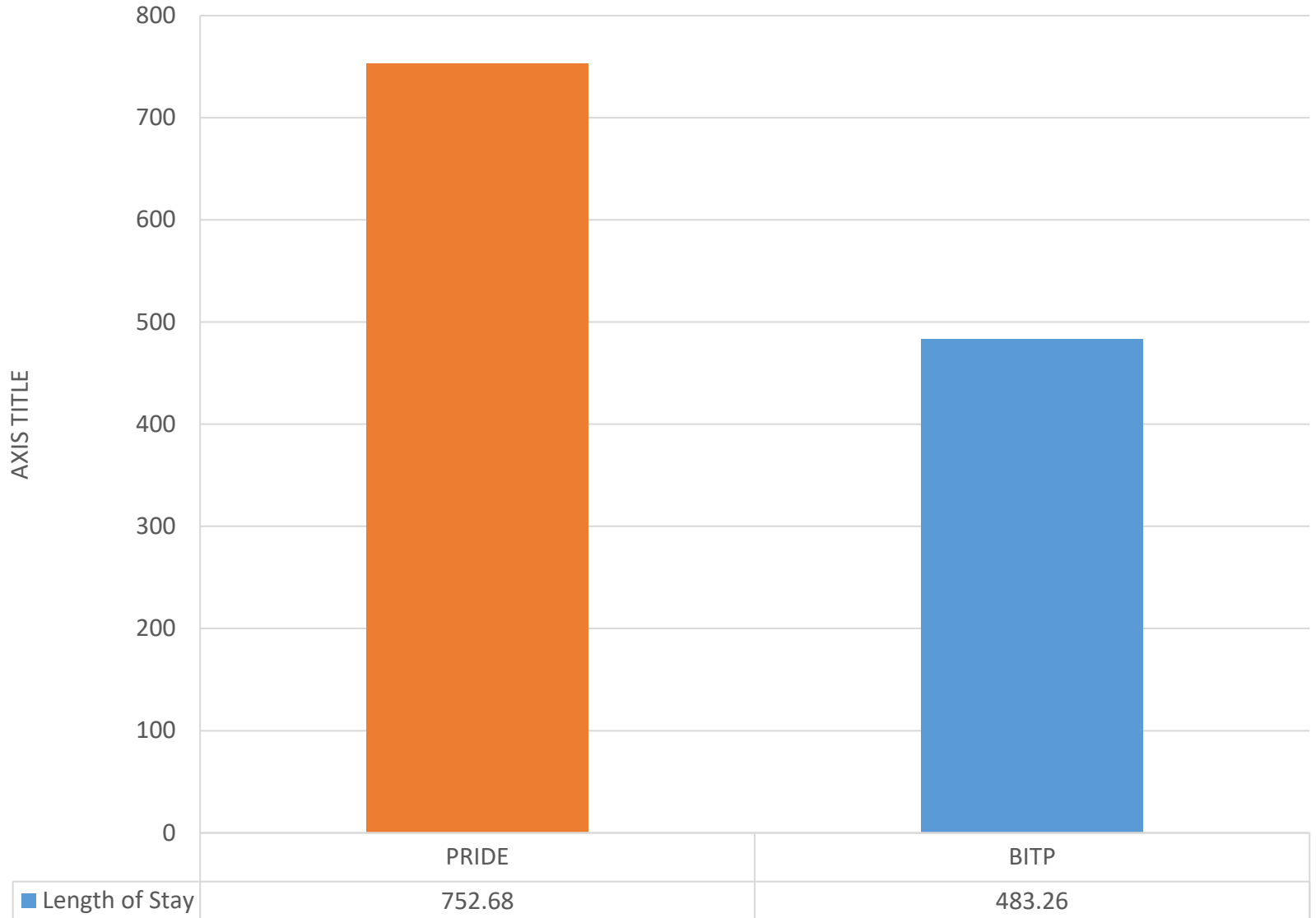
■ 25% Delay ■ Atypical ■ High Prob



# Results

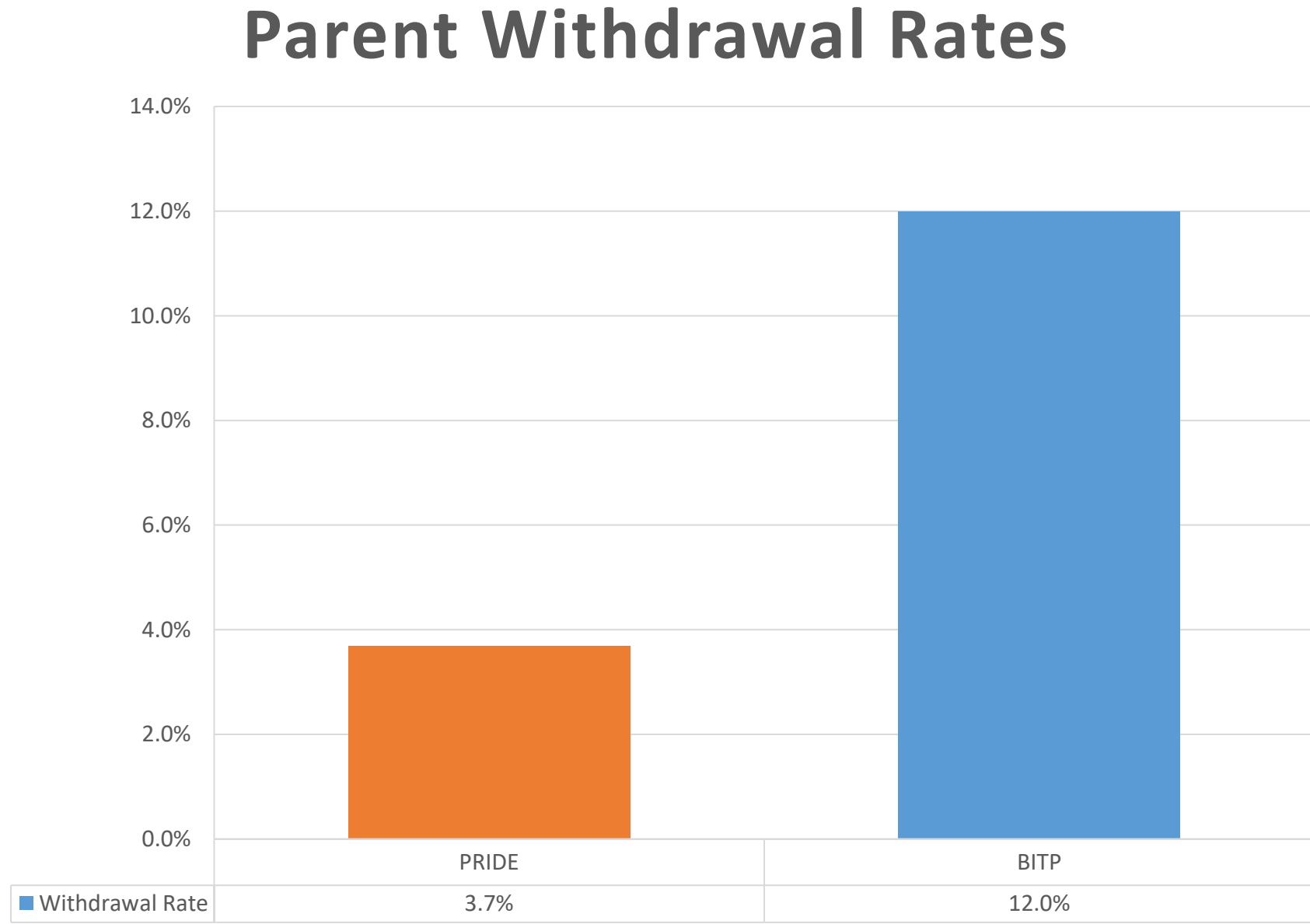
a, b Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < 0.05$

## Length of Stay



# Results: Parent Withdrawal Rates

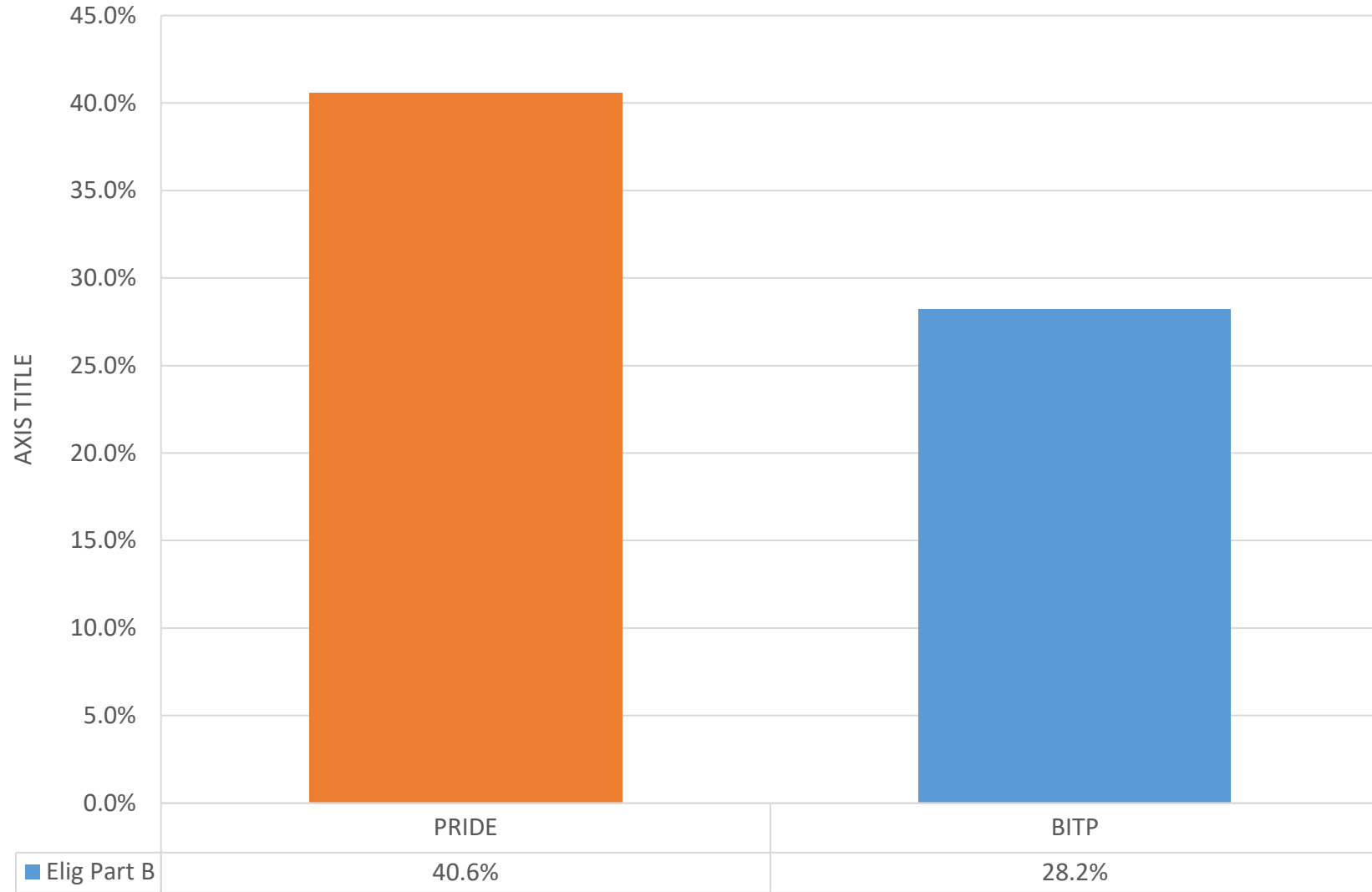
<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$



# Results

a,b Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

## Eligibility for Part B Services



# Supplemental Analysis: Differences Between Groups on Part B Eligibility

## *Eligibility Differences among Eligible for Part B Services at Age 3*

	PRIDE	BITP
	n (%)	
Eligible for IEP at age 3	(n = 110)	(n = 193)
25% developmental delay	17(15.5) <sup>b</sup>	107(55.4) <sup>a</sup>
Atypical development	4(3.6)	5(2.6)
Diagnosed high probability condition	89(80.9) <sup>a</sup>	81(42.0) <sup>b</sup>

*Note.* <sup>a,b</sup> Percentages with different subscripts were significantly different between two programs at  $p < .05$ .

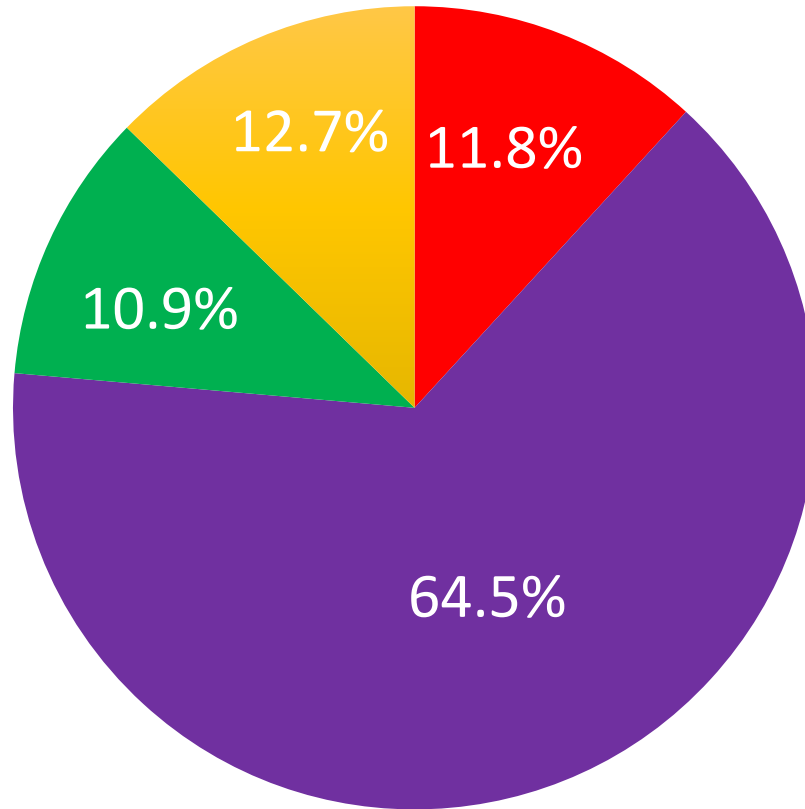
- Compared to one another
  - More children in BITP who were eligible for Part B were eligible for EI because of a 25% delay
  - More children in PRIDE who were eligible for Part B were eligible for EI because of a high probability condition
- No group difference in eligibility by atypical development



# Results: Transition

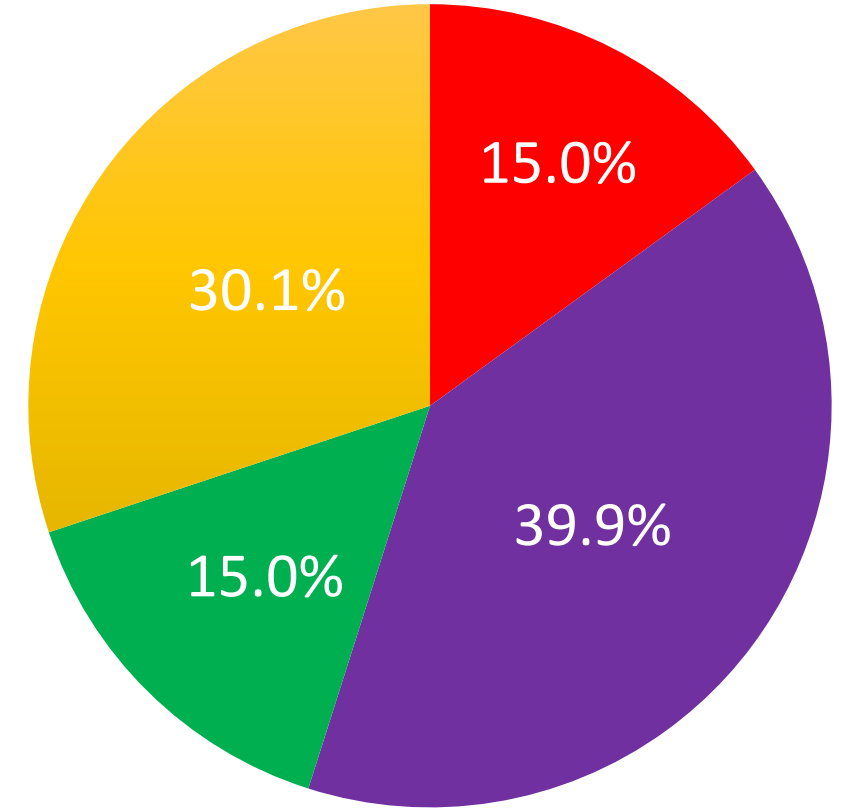
<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

## PRIDE Eligibility



- Completion of IFSP after age 3
- Transition at Age 3
- Transition After 3
- Transition beginning School Year Following 4th Birthday

## BITP Eligibility



- Completion of IFSP after age 3
- Transition at Age 3
- Transition After 3
- Transition beginning School Year Following 4th Birthday





# Results: Unable to Contact

<sup>a,b</sup> Percentages or means were significantly different at  $p < .05$

	PRIDE (n = 271)	BITP (n = 685)
	n (%) or M(SD)	
Gender		
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No Difference



# Supplemental Analysis: Differences Between Groups for Unable to Contact

*Characteristics for Children Who Could Not Be Contacted*

	PRIDE ( <i>n</i> = 66)	BITP ( <i>n</i> = 179)
	<i>n</i> (%) or <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	
Source of referral		
Parent	0(0) <sup>a</sup>	85(47) <sup>b</sup>
Other/Professional	66(100) <sup>a</sup>	94(53) <sup>b</sup>
Age at referral (month)	6.02(6.02) <sup>a</sup>	13.21(9.98) <sup>b</sup>
Eligibility		
25% developmental delay	6(9)	15(8)
Atypical development	7(11) <sup>a</sup>	85(48) <sup>b</sup>
Diagnosed high probability condition	53(80) <sup>a</sup>	79(44) <sup>b</sup>
Length of stay in the program (day)	516.03(296.07) <sup>a</sup>	363.24(210.35) <sup>b</sup>

*Note.* Percentages or means with different subscripts were significantly different between two programs at  $p < .05$ .

- Source of referral
- Age at referral
- Eligibility criteria
  - Atypical
  - High Prob
- Length of stay in EI



# Conclusions

- PRIDE streamlines & expedites access to services resulting in younger referral age
- Early formation of trusted relationship with service coordinator may minimize parent withdrawal and lead to longer length of participation
- Higher percentage eligible for Part B in PRIDE may be related to more severe medical conditions as noted by higher rate eligible via high probability condition and younger GA at birth
- Higher rate of transition to IEP at 3 in PRIDE may be associated with information sharing in NICU Follow-Up and continuity of care by Developmental Pediatrician
- Sustainability of PRIDE attributed to
  - It's the right thing to do for families as it streamlines access to EI and embeds EI within the child's medical system of care
  - It's fiscally responsible as it saves EI money by utilizing evaluations routinely conducted in the NICU and NICU Follow-Up
- Study provides initial evidence to support program replication & expansion, but more research is needed



Highlight from *UMMS Maryland's Health Matters* article, Spring 2022.  
-By Daniel Brantley

## GROWING THE VILLAGE

Because Anna Benshoof was 40 years old and pregnant with triplets, her pregnancy was high risk from day one. Her provider put her on bed rest, then required she stay at the hospital for ongoing monitoring.

At twenty-five weeks and four days, Beshoof was given an ultimatum: "Deliver today or die." On October 11, 2012, her triplets were born. Sadly, two—Theodore and Zachary—never made it home. On February 4, 2013, Nicholas did, weighing 6 pounds 5 ounces and wearing an oxygen mask.

"I knew nothing about what babies should or shouldn't be able to do," Benshoof said. "I needed people to tell me what milestones he should be hitting and to help him hit them. That's what PRIDE did."

## AT YOUR SERVICE

Days after Nicholas's homecoming, physical therapists came knocking. Occupational therapists weren't far behind.

The therapists helped Nicholas grow stronger and develop fine-motor skills. They also helped him learn to eat solid foods. Along

the way, they taught Benshoof and her husband, Bruce, how to help their young child. From Benshoof's perspective, this education was vital to helping her son develop.

## BEYOND THE PRIDE

When Nicholas graduated from PRIDE in March 2016, he was walking, playing with toys and eating solid foods. Though he wasn't speaking yet, that skill came soon enough. Now in third grade, Nicholas talks all the time, especially about Harry Potter.

Impressed with the power of early intervention, Benshoof became a parent member of the State Interagency Coordinating Council and co-chair of the Baltimore City Interagency Council. In these roles, Benshoof educates parents about the need for and availability of early intervention services.

She encourages parents to reach out for help. After all, she said, "It takes a village to raise a kid."



Highlight from *UMMS Maryland's Health Matters* article, Spring 2022.  
-By Daniel Brantley

## A NEW EXPERIENCE

It was Carmela Williams's fourth pregnancy, and all was well—until her March 5, 2020, delivery. Then, her blood pressure dropped. Her unborn baby's heart rate plummeted along with it, dictating an emergency C-section.

For 28 minutes after her birth, baby Aleshia's oxygen level was at 80% oxygen. The lack of oxygen caused hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy, a condition that can result in severe developmental delays.

"I was confused," Williams said. "Aleshia was born full-term, so I couldn't wrap my head around what was going on."

### TO THE NICU

To help Aleshia thrive, she was transferred to the NICU at University of Maryland Children's Hospital. During Aleshia's second and final week there, Williams met Aleshia's service coordinator, Hayley Anthony.

When Williams had questions, Anthony provided answers. Anthony also attended follow-up NICU

appointments with Williams. And made sure Aleshia's at-home care ran smoothly.

With moderate to severe hearing loss, Aleshia needed intervention from day one. Anthony and Maryland's PRIDE made sure she got it.

### HELP AT HOME

"Aleshia is the youngest of my four children, and I've never needed these extra services," Williams said. "I wouldn't have known where to begin without PRIDE."

One of the main services PRIDE provided was speech therapy. Now, Aleshia knows sign language. She can hear well when wearing her hearing aids, and she loves singing at the top of her lungs.

"If I had to do all this on my own, it would have been a nightmare," Williams said. "Maryland's PRIDE really takes down the stress level that all NICU parents experience."



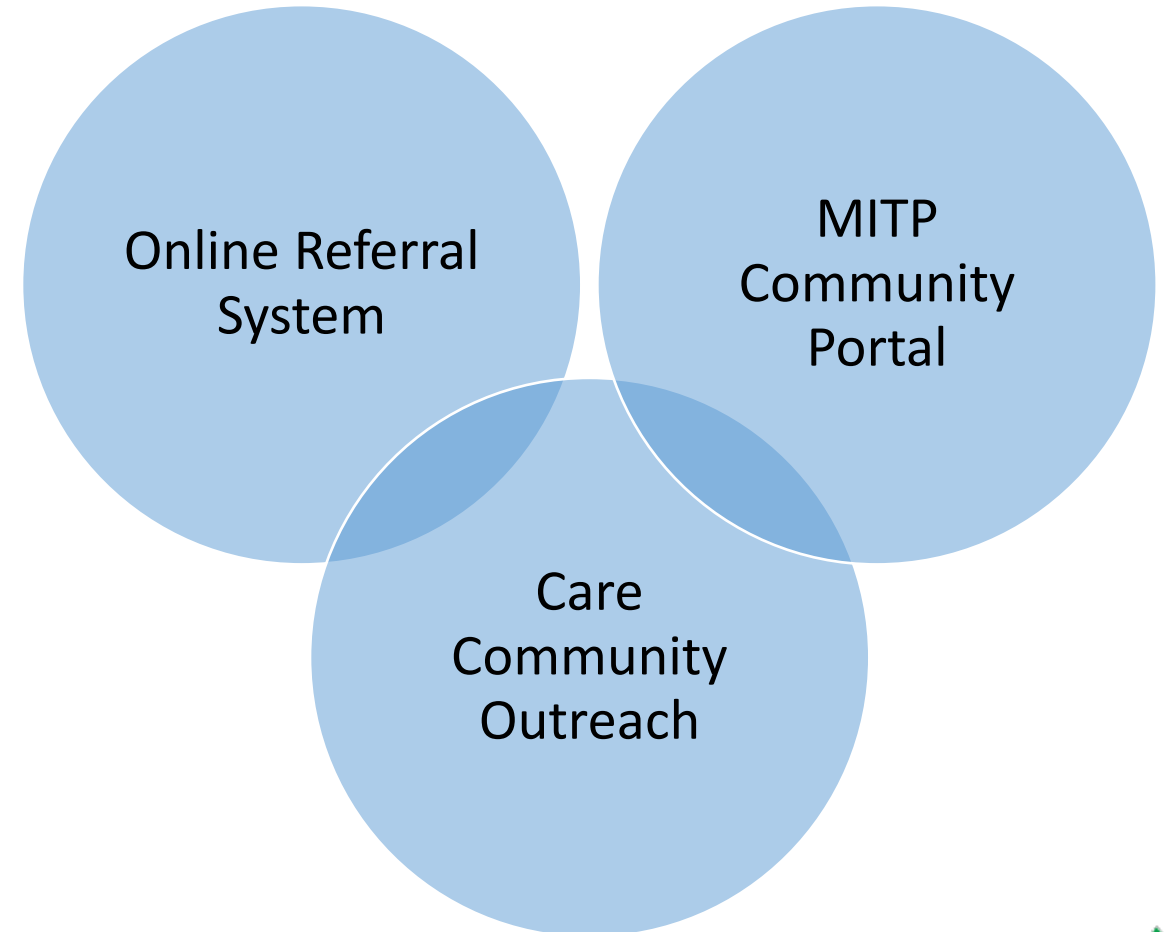
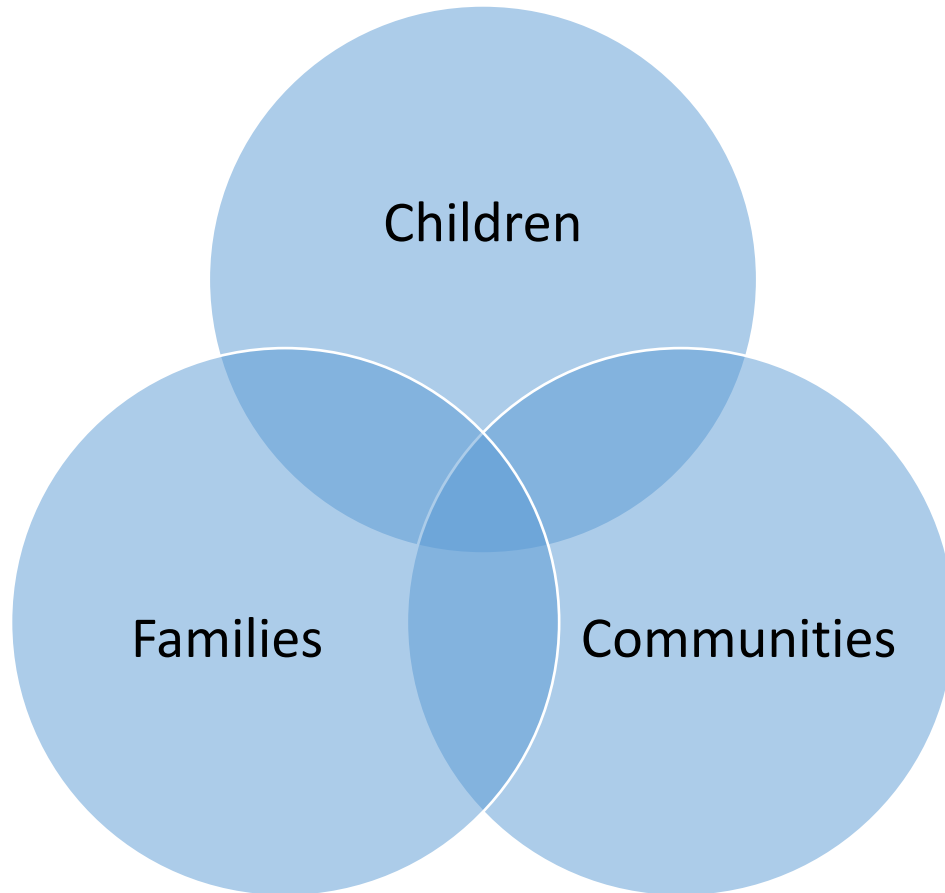
# Connecting Families and Partners



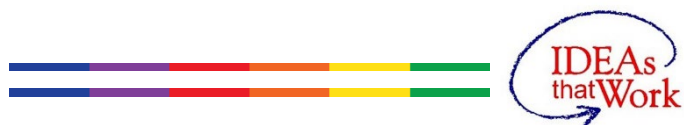
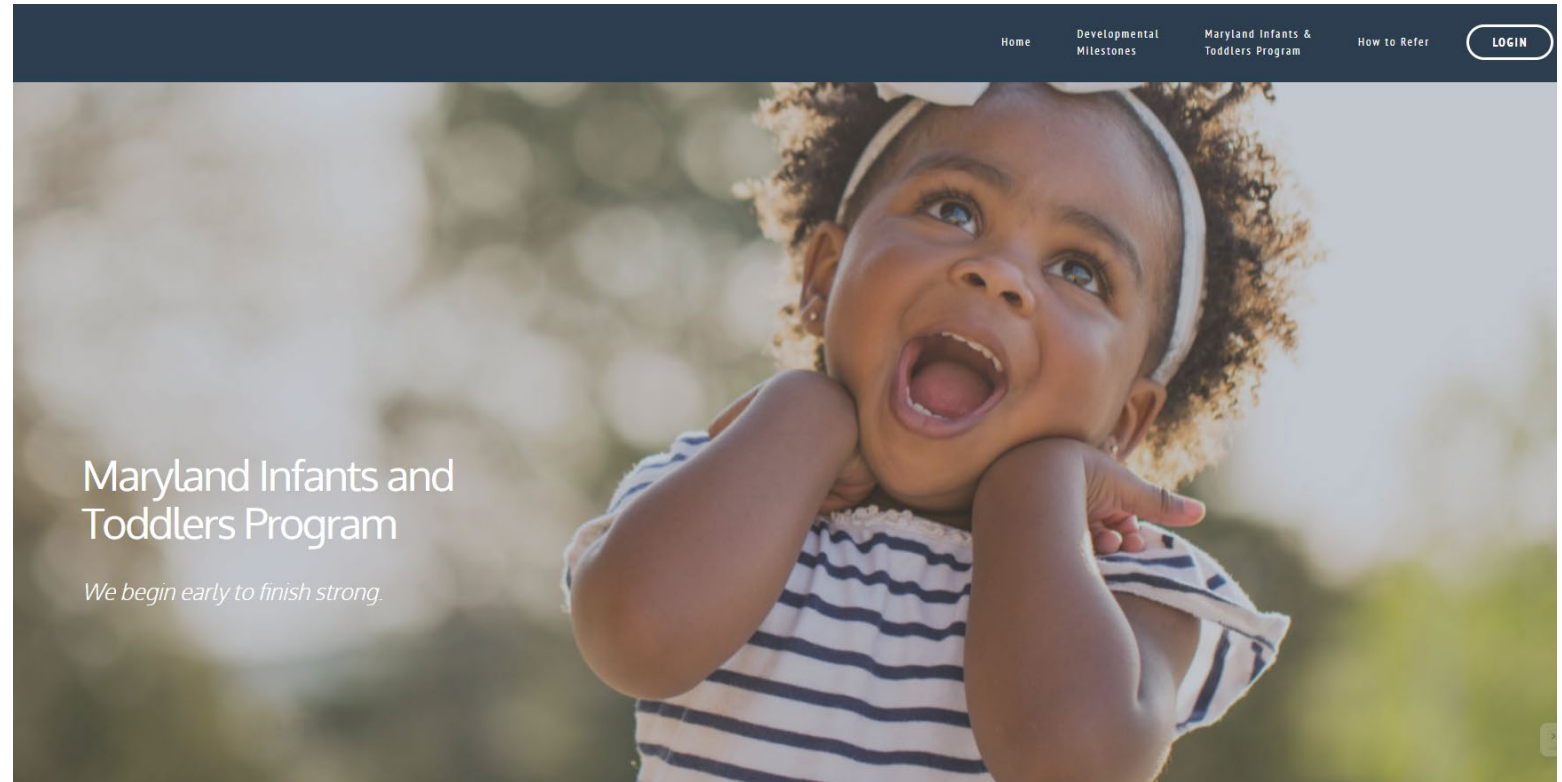
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# Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (MITP)



# MITP Online Referral System



**2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE**





# Online Referral System

- Ability for referral source to add supporting documentation such as medical records, test results, videos, etc.
- Parents may include images and videos of their child's development
- Parent consent

## Supporting Documentation

Question 1 of 1

Please attach any related documents or images you wish to share which might help in the evaluation of the referral.

Known compatible file types are: pdf, doc, docx, jpg, png, bmp, and img. File size limit is 30MB.

No supporting documentation has been attached to this referral.

Add File

## Optional Parent Consent

With signed parent consent, we can share eligibility determinations with you. The Infants and Toddlers Program staff will make every attempt to obtain this consent. However, if you have a signed Consent to Release available and would like to share it with us, please upload here.

I have uploaded the signed Consent to Release.

Yes  No  N/A

Draft



# Online Referral System

- Status of referral report informs referral source
- Referral source receives an email notification for all referrals marked as Unable to Process

Status	
Submitted	Referral has been successfully submitted from the Online Referral system.
Received	Referral has been received by the jurisdiction.
Processed	Referral has been reviewed; parent will be contacted.
Unable to Process	Jurisdiction is not able to process the referral, e.g., wrong jurisdiction, duplicate online referral, etc. Referrer will receive a prompt to log back into the system to view the specific reason(s).
Unable to Contact	After multiple attempts to contact the family through a variety of ways, the local Infants and Toddlers team was unable to get in touch with the family and the referral has been closed.
Eligible	Child has been evaluated and found eligible for Part C services; parent may now choose to accept services through an Individualized Family Services Plan.
Not Eligible	Child has been evaluated but does not meet the eligibility criteria at this time; however, the child may be re-referred with additional or future concerns.

OKAY



# Online Referral System

- Dashboard and reports give feedback to referral source
- Data over time
  - % children eligible
  - % declined to move forward
  - % unable to process

## Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program

### Dashboard



# Online Referral System

- Dashboard and reports give feedback to referral source
- Eligibility status of referred child; Service Coordinator information

ID	Referred Individual	Referral Record	Referral Record Status ⓘ
115	Huck Finn Birthdate: September 4, 2021	Submitted: August 18, 2022 Created: August 18, 2022 Last Updated: August 18, 2022	Eligible Service Coordinator: Coord15 User1-pkelleycte@gmail.com- Eligibility Determination: Diagnosed Condition - Chronic lung disease (CLD), Periventricular Leukomalacia (PVL) Status Details: Active Status Updated: September 15, 2022 4:00 PM
124	Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater III Birthdate: August 12, 2020	Submitted: August 18, 2022 Created: August 18, 2022 Last Updated: August 18, 2022	Processed Status Updated: September 15, 2022 4:00 PM
116	Encyclopedia Brown Birthdate: July 4, 2021	Submitted: August 18, 2022 Created: August 18, 2022 Last Updated: August 18, 2022	Not Eligible Service Coordinator: -- Status Updated: August 18, 2022 8:00 PM
117	Wendy Sue Darling Birthdate: June 7, 2020	Submitted: August 18, 2022 Created: August 18, 2022 Last Updated: August 18, 2022	Unable to Contact Service Coordinator: -- Status Details: Inactive - Attempts to contact unsuccessful Status Updated: August 18, 2022 8:00 PM



# MITP Community Portal

Families

ITP  
Providers

Care  
Community



## BtK MARYLAND'S COMMUNITY PORTAL

Welcome to the **Maryland Birth to Kindergarten Community Portal**, a secure platform for a child's team to share data, manage documents, collaborate with care partners, and build a shared understanding of the child's developmental trajectory.



### Access child record

Access the child's IFSP and other care related information.



### Message care team

Send a message to one or more members of the child's care team.



### Share documents

Add care related documents to the child record.



### Collaborate with care partners

Invite care partners to jointly manage care and share data.

[SIGN IN TO GET STARTED](#)





# Community Portal:

# Family Features

- Family can invite any member of their care team/child's community to participate in the portal

## Invite

INVITE    STATUS

### Invite a care team member to your child's team



Enter the email address of the care team member and designate the child record and level of permission for this individual.



We'll send an email invitation to the care team member. If they already have an account with the portal, they can accept the invitation through the email or directly from portal notification.



If they don't yet have an account, they can use the link in the email to create an account and accept the invitation.



Where should we send this invitation?

email address

Confirm email address

email address





# Community Portal: Parent Features

- Family controls access and permission levels of each community member

**Care Team**

CARE TEAM INVITE PERMISSIONS

Dante's Care team

Active members

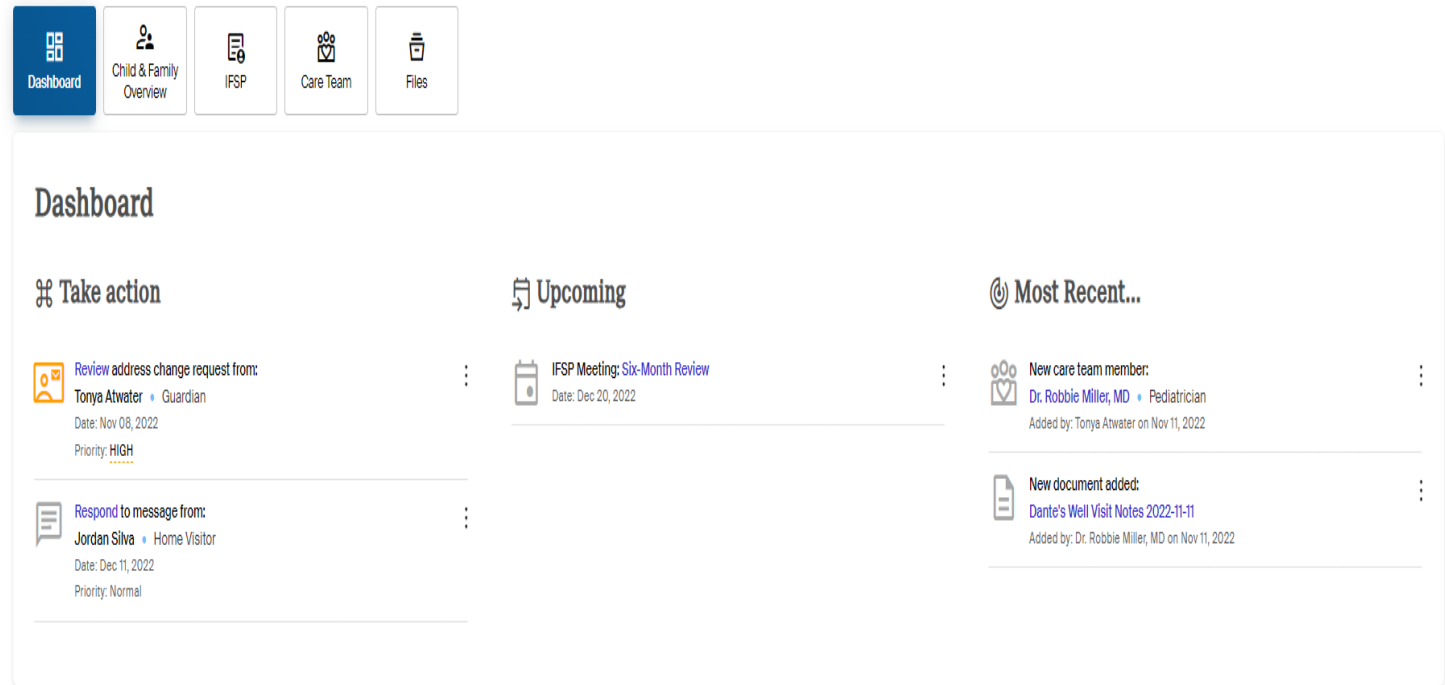
Member Name	Role	Status	Organization	Address	Contact	Email	Action
Tonya Atwater	Guardian	Active	---	1010 Frank Ave, Suite 777, Frederick, MD 21702	222-222-2222	tonya.atwater@gmail.com	SEND MESSAGE
Justin Thyme	Service Coordinator	Active	FCDC	1010 Frank Ave, Suite 777, Frederick, MD 21702	222-222-2222	justin@frederickcountymd.gov	SEND MESSAGE
Robbie Miller, MD	Pediatrician	Active	Johns Hopkins Community Physicians (JHCP)	1010 Frank Ave, Suite 777, Frederick, MD 21702	222-222-2222	miller@jhmi.edu	SEND MESSAGE
Jesse Yen	Service Provider	Active	FCDC	1010 Frank Ave, Suite 777, Frederick, MD 21702	222-222-2222	jesse@frederickcountymd.gov	SEND MESSAGE
Jordan Silva	Home Visitor	Active	FCDC	1010 Frank Ave, Suite 777, Frederick, MD 21702	222-222-2222	jsilva@frederickcountymd.gov	SEND MESSAGE





# Community Portal: Care Team Features

- Reminder to send notes in advance of an IFSP meeting
- Upload feature for notes/messages to family, SC or provider







# Community Portal: Care Team Features

- IFSP components: Progress towards outcomes and description of services received

Dashboard Child & Family Overview **IFSP** Care Team Files

### IFSP: Outcomes

OUTCOMES SERVICES IFSP

**Outcomes Achieved**

- Dante will participate in mealtimes by putting small amounts of food in her mouth on her own so that Mrs. Atwater is confident he can eat safely. When Dante completes each meal in a day by only putting bite-size amounts of food in his mouth, for two weeks, by the end of summer 2022.

**Outcomes In Progress**

- Dante will participate in playtime by playing calmly with his brother so that everyone remains happy and safe. The children are able to play during the morning play time 4 days a week without wrestling and crying for one month, by Nov. 2022.

**Outcomes Needing Development**

N/A

**Outcomes No Longer Needed**

- Dante will participate in outings by following Mom's directions so that he stays safe. Dante follows Mom's directions to stay with her in the OT waiting room each week for 2 months, by Oct. 2022.

**Outcomes Postponed**

N/A





# Community Portal:

# Highlights & Special Features

- Resources: Provider Directories, Early Childhood Articles
- Calendar Feature, Email and Text Notifications for family and Care Team



## Provider Directories

Discover and connect with regulated child care programs and providers in the state of Maryland, including quality Child Care Centers, School-Age Child Care Programs, Family Child Care Homes and Public Prekindergarten.

- **The Maryland Head Start Association**  
The Maryland Head Start Association assists Head Start programs by producing staff and parent training opportunities; by advocating on behalf of Head Start children and families across the state of Maryland.
- **Maryland Family Network LOCATE: Child Care Service**  
The Maryland Family Network helps Maryland's young children and their families by providing Family Support and Child Care Resource Centers and by doing advocacy work in Annapolis and Washington.
- **Judy Centers**  
The Judith P. Hoyer Center Early Learning Hubs, also known as "Judy Centers," help prepare children age birth through kindergarten for school readiness.

All Provider Directories



## Resource List

Review helpful information and resources for families, including information about developmental milestones and resources that support healthy growth and learning opportunities for young children.

- **Making Access Happen**  
A joint MSDE-Johns Hopkins University site designed to support and increase the participation of three- to five-year-old children with disabilities in public and private community-based early care and education programs.
- **Maryland Family Network (MFN)**  
Resources and information on early childhood program management, provider training and professionalism, public policy and child advocacy, school readiness initiatives, children with disabilities, and numerous related topics.
- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**  
NAEYC advocates for public policies and funding to support a comprehensive, high-quality early childhood education system, engages in early childhood education research, and works to improve professional practice and working conditions in the early childhood field.

All Resources



## Early Childhood Articles

Learn more about family-centered and evidence-based early intervention strategies and supports to help families plan and advocate for their children.

- **Child Outcomes**  
The three child outcomes, measured by early intervention and early childhood special education systems, encompass functional skills and behaviors that are meaningful for a child's participation in everyday routines.
- **Family Engagement**  
The inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems.
- **Transition from Part C to Preschool**  
Resources supporting seamless transitions for children and their families as they leave Part C and other early childhood programs to ensure that they have timely access to appropriate services.

All Early Childhood Articles



# Child Care Partnership

Under new State law, beginning July 1, 2023, each year a childcare program must make information about the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program and the Local Lead Agency responsible for administering the Program available to the parent or guardian of a child under the age of 3 years. This information can be provided via personal message (including email), a document acknowledging parent or guardian receipt, or text message.

If the parent or guardian requests, the childcare program shall assist the parent or guardian with scheduling a time and convenient location for the Local Lead Agency to provide the appropriate screening.



**WE BEGIN EARLY<sup>TO</sup>  
FINISH STRONG**

Anyone can submit a referral to the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program available for eligible children younger than 36 months who live in Maryland.

[referral.mditp.org](https://referral.mditp.org)  
**1-800-535-0182**



**Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program**  
supporting young children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the



# Discussion & Questions



**2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE**



# Resource Spotlight

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) website
  - Brings together IDEA information and resources from the Department and its grantees.
  - <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>
- IDEAS That Work
  - For information from research to practice initiatives funded by OSEP that address the provisions of IDEA and ESSA. This website includes resources, links, and other important information relevant to OSEP's research to practice efforts.
  - <https://osepideasthatwork.org/>





# 2023 OSEP Leadership and Project Directors' Conference



## *DISCLAIMER:*

*The contents of this presentation were developed by the presenters for the 2023 OSEP Conference. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.*

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