

Early Learning Matters

The Key to a Thriving Community

High-quality, Affordable Early Care and Education

Each Indiana community is unique in its needs and opportunities, but one common thread across the state, in every community, is the importance of affordable, high-quality early care and education.

The first five years of a child's life are foundational in their development. Research shows that investments in early care and education result in fewer investments later in the areas of K-12 remediation, health care, criminal justice costs and more. Accessible and affordable high-quality early care and education creates a two-generational economic impact, allowing parents to participate in the workforce and provide for their families while engaging and educating the next generation workforce.

Early care and education is a community-wide issue. Investments in early childhood education create sustainable, thriving communities. By bringing community leaders, organizations and businesses to the table, communities can create scalable, sustainable solutions that benefit them for years to come.

Key Facts About Early Learning in Indiana

Lifelong Learning:

85% of a child's capacity to learn is developed by age 5.

High Cost of Care:

The annual cost of care for one child is \$9,000 - nearly equal to a year of in-state college tuition.

Return on Investment:

For every \$1 invested in early learning, \$4 are returned to communities.

Few Options:

Four out of 10 Hoosier children live in a child care desert, which means less than one high-quality childcare seat exists for every three children. This puts many parents who want or need to work in an impossible situation.

Lack of Quality:

Less than 1/3 of Indiana's known child care programs rank as high-quality.

Contact Us: Text “partner” to 833.222.1221 or visit bit.ly/partnercca

Across Indiana, families, businesses and local leaders can find the supports they need with child care resource and referral agencies.



Child Care
Resource and
Referral Network

Powered by  CHILD CARE
ANSWERS

In Focus: Hendricks County



8,397

Children (0-5)
who may need
care

4,675

Licensed Capacity

2,413

High Quality
Capacity

11.88%

Average percent of
median income a
family would pay
for high quality care
for one child

Actions to Consider

Community leaders and organizations can come together to advocate for affordable and accessible high-quality early care and education. Consider the following:

- Engage local stakeholders and leaders. Include individuals from early learning providers, elected office, K-12 education, higher education, healthcare, families, businesses, economic development organizations and others invested in early learning.
- Create scalable strategies, modeling after what other communities have done.
- Engage businesses and encourage them to support their employees' child care needs.
- Create an early childhood coalition (ask your Child Care Resource and Referral agency for tips and strategies).
- Plan an event on early childhood education and economic growth.

Community Success

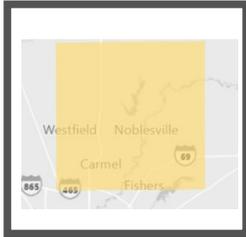
First5 Early Learning Coalition is a program of the Rush County Community Foundation (RCCF). First5 shares and promotes the importance and economic value of investing in Rush County's youngest citizens. The coalition was formed in 2018 as a way to proactively address issues affecting the county's 16,000 residents. Since its founding, First5 has helped increase the availability of child care and better engage families in their child's care and education.



"RCCF looked at a lot of data on addiction, unemployment, education and more. Everything seemed to funnel back to the beginning and those first five years."

Jeri McCorkle, Coordinator, First5 Early Learning Coalition.

In Focus: Hamilton County



18,562

Children (0-5)
who may need
care

11,515

Licensed Capacity

5,177

High Quality
Capacity

11.89%

Average percent of
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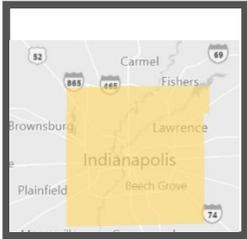
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In Focus: Marion County



54,275

Children (0-5)
who may need
care

43,406

Licensed Capacity

22,558

High Quality
Capacity

20.99%

Average percent of
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