

Early Childhood Development: Statewide Indiana Resources

BUREAU OF CHILD CARE

QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

Indiana has chosen to implement a voluntary Quality Rating System that builds on a home grown model. All regulated child care providers will have the opportunity to participate. The original model was implemented by Early Childhood Alliance in Allen County and is known as “**Paths to QUALITY.**” The model and its replication in other areas of the state have shown dramatic success in assisting parents in locating quality child care and in improving the overall level of care in these areas. **There will be a phased in statewide implementation period beginning 1/1/08 through 1/1/09.** The system will be implemented in partnership with the Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral and the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children.

LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS

To become a licensed child care center, the provider must: (1) Attend orientation training session #1 (start-up process and information) through the local child care resource and referral agency to sign up for this training. (2) Attend orientation training session #2 (preparation for licensure). (3) Check for local zoning and building code requirements. (4) Structure must meet occupancy requirements and, if required, submit building plans for approval to a series of state divisions and departments dealing with health and safety. (5) Pass on-site inspections from Division of Family Resources and Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Fire and Building Safety Division. A provisional license is then issued and the child care center can accept children on the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) voucher program.

LICENSED CHILD CARE HOME

To become a licensed child care home the provider must: (1) Attend orientation training session #1 (start-up process and information) and then training session #2 (preparation for licensure) through the local child care resource and referral agency. (2) Prepare home for inspection. (3) Send completed application packet to licensing consultant. (4) Licensing consultant makes appointment for initial inspection. (5) Pass on-site inspection. (6) Recommendation for license is sent to central office for review and approval. Once a license is issued the child care home can accept children on the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) voucher program.

VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Voluntary Certification Program (VCP) is offered to all Indiana unlicensed registered child care ministry providers who want to ensure that the basic health and safety needs of

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the children they serve are being met. The voluntary program offers the tools, information and assistance necessary to attain these standards.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program provides child care subsidies to low income, working families and promotes and enhances the quality of early care and education so that Indiana children are safe, healthy and learning. Families must then choose a child care provider who meets CCDF provider eligibility standards. Federal and state matching funds are used to support this block grant. In 2007, an additional \$10 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds was transferred to the CCDF program. The additional dollars were used to increase the CCDF maximum eligibility income level from 140% to 170% of the Federal Poverty Level. **Changing the income level for CCDF eligibility moved Indiana from 49th to 30th in the country** in eligibility rates.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® INDIANA

Educational scholarships to teachers, home providers and directors through both a formal credit based classroom education model from higher education institutions throughout Indiana, as well as through other non-traditional methods, such as online learning and on-site training. 1175 child care providers were awarded credit based educational scholarships earning 6991 credit hours. 537 child care providers from 55 different counties earned a total of 47,114 contact hours of non-formal CDA credential training.

Mentors as Partners (MAP)

Onsite technical assistance and other quality improvement supports offered to individual child care providers to improve the quality of care provided. 171 child care providers volunteered to participate in mentoring.

Indiana Accreditation Project

Onsite technical assistance and other quality improvement supports offered to child care providers seeking National Accreditation status. 284 facilities and 114 child care homes serving 10,684 children received financial and/or technical support for accreditation.

Infant/Toddler Specialists of Indiana Initiative

High quality research and credit based training offered to professionals through Purdue University in collaboration with Indiana University to improve the quality of child care offered to infants and toddlers. 476 infant toddler specialists from 73 counties took advantage of high quality research, resources and activities through a web based network. 151 infant toddler specialists participated in intensive credit based training through Indiana University and Purdue University.

Parent Referrals

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During 2007, 14,104 unique families accessed the services of a statewide system of child care resource and referral agencies. Each of these families was provided with consumer education materials and one-on-one counseling regarding the selection of quality child care for their children.

Indiana Department of Education

Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children from Birth to Age 5

From kindergarten through twelfth grade, academic standards have been established to promote excellence and equity in education. Excellence is important in education today for future success. Academic standards represent the *essential content* every student needs in order to have a basis for understanding a subject area. Indiana's foundations to the academic standards include skills and experiences for children's development. The foundations to the standards address skills and competencies that children are to achieve from birth to age five. The foundations are not a comprehensive list of skills that a particular child must exhibit. They are a guide to assist young learners with knowledge and skills in the early years that will prepare them for success in school.

These foundations have been developed by individuals with expertise in each specialized area and have been based on the latest national research and findings for each content area. By outlining specific skills and concepts and giving examples of instructional strategies, these foundations to the standards will support teachers, parents, caregivers and other professional personnel as they develop appropriate experiences for young children. At the heart of the effort to promote quality early childhood experiences for all, foundations to the standards have been developed to support adults that work with children from birth to age five. These foundations are designed to assist all who work with young children in approaching the various domains from a developmentally appropriate perspective.

Indiana Head Start

Indiana Head Start is federally funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Funding has enabled Head Start programs to provide comprehensive services for low-income Hoosier children and their families for over 35 years. Head Start programs serve children ages three through five. In 1994, federal legislation was passed to establish Early Head Start services for pregnant women, infant and toddlers (age's birth to three). All programs provide early childhood educational, social, medical, dental, nutritional and mental health services to the enrolled children. The Head Start philosophy is based on three key points. These are:

Comprehensive child development services. To develop fully and to achieve social competence, children and their families need a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach

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to early childhood development and health services as well as family and community partnerships.

Parent involvement. Parents are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the Head Start program, including shared governance in policy and program decisions that respond to their interests and needs. Additionally, Head Start programs work in close partnership with parents and other family members to develop and utilize their strengths so that all involved adults may successfully support child, personal and family goals.

Community partnerships and community-based services. Specific models of service provision flow out of the characteristics of different communities. To fulfill program and community goals, Head Start programs build linkages and collaborations with other service providers and leaders in the community.

The Head Start programs serve all 92 Indiana counties while Early Head Start programs serve 22 counties. **Federal financial assistance is directly distributed to the local programs through contracted grantees.** Program staff work in conjunction with and report to the Region V Administration of Children and Families office in Chicago.

Indiana Head Start program relationships with state agencies have been normally confined to licensing through the Bureau of Child Care, the Child Care Food Program through the Department of Education, the Commercial Driver's licensing for bus drivers through the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and as needed, bus inspection by the State Police. Programs also provide immunization statistics to the Indiana Department of Health. With the increased national emphasis on partnerships, program relationships with other state agencies and entities are gradually expanding.