

# Early Learning

INDIANA



## Child Care Resource and Referral Annual Plan

Key Year 3 Initiatives and Planned Timelines

October 2021

# Overview

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In Year 2 of the Child Care Resource and Referral Central Office (CCRRCO) contract, Early Learning Indiana continued building upon the foundation necessary to advance the work of the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) and the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies with families, providers and community partners. Several highlights from the Year 2 deliverables are referenced below. A complete list of deliverables can be found in the Appendix.

- Created the new CCRR Network brand, providing CCRRs with a brand playbook and a digital asset management tool that has facilitated 1,033 downloads and 880 total logins across the platform for network use
- Strengthened referral services through the creation of a referral guide and new procedures for enhanced referrals
- Revolutionized the way we contemplate “access” through the creation of the Early Learning Access Index and accompanying Closing the Gap Report
- Established the foundational components of the new provider recruitment initiative and learning communities
- Launched the Business and Community Engagement toolkits, which were used to guide and facilitate nearly 8,000 interactions over the first few months following network launch
- Determined true costs drivers and modeled provider costs across varied auspices and levels of quality in the Indiana Early Childhood Education Cost Study

- Created a comprehensive CCRR team member handbook and network policies to ensure consistent action across the state
- Conducted CCRR team member reflective feedback sessions and self-evaluation survey resulting in eight concrete actions to be applied across the network

Set out within this document are brief overviews of the key quarterly deliverables of the Year 3 workplan. While this document highlights initiatives across the four audiences of families, providers, community and system partners and planned work for the upcoming year, we recognize that this plan is not exhaustive of our entire CCRRCO scope of work. On a regular cadence — both internally and in partnership with OECOSL — we review our contract to ensure that we deliver and, as appropriate, iterate upon the ongoing initiatives as well as complete ad hoc deliverables throughout the year, in alignment with the outlined scope.





## The work is guided by our shared vision of the CCRRCO audiences.



### Families

Families will understand the importance of and have increased access to high-quality, accessible early learning opportunities.



### Providers

Program capacity will increase, and providers will be actively engaging and utilizing available resources to support growth, quality and sustainability.



### Community Partners

Community leaders and stakeholders will recognize the value of having a strong early childhood infrastructure and be engaged to support.



### System Partners

System partners will engage in active collaboration to build consistent messaging for key audiences and drive cohesive initiatives to families, providers and partners.

## The work is further grounded in our focus on the following.

- Working to streamline experiences for all audiences so that the value of high-quality early education is clear and the calls to action are consistent across OECOSL-funded stakeholders.
- Providing systems leaders, including CCRR Program Directors, clarity on objectives and goals for new projects and initiatives to ensure consistency in delivery.
- Ensuring CCRR ownership for the execution of their work.



# Project Overviews and Deliverables

## **1.1 General: CCRR Annual Planning**

Early Learning Indiana will execute a kick-off to the new contract year for CCRRs. The session will focus on mapping broad strategies and specific project tactics aligned directly with the CCRRs' scope of work and connected to and supported by the CCRR-CO annual work plan. The session will provide for dedicated time among OECOSL, the CCRRCO and the program directors to create team and network-wide goals, and focused time between the program directors and their teams to identify specific strategies and tactics to achieve the agreed upon network goals.

## **2.1 Consumer Education: Multimedia Supports for Stakeholders**

To enhance the technical assistance we provide directly to families, providers and community members, the Brighter Futures Consumer Education Call Center will create video tutorials and other multimedia experiences to complement existing support articles. Each quarter, we will launch two new resources for Early Ed Connect, I-LEAD or Indiana Learning Paths to address the specific needs of our audiences.

## **2.4 Family Outreach: 2Gen Implementation**

Early Learning Indiana has worked with CCRRs to establish an understanding of the 2Gen framework, align around the role of the family navigator and begin exploring needed resources such as a resource bank and corresponding needs assessment. This year, we will put into practice the ideas generated, as we build and deploy 2Gen assets and resources, train CCRRs on application of the 2Gen framework and connect CCRRs with community partners to ensure successful handoffs for families in need of services.

## **2.5 Provider Outreach: New Provider Learning Communities**

Early Learning Indiana will continue our work to enhance the new and emerging provider experience. Through consultation with CCRRs, we built a comprehensive plan to overhaul the new provider experience, and will now implement the strategies outlined in our plan, including execution of the marketing campaign, creation of a resource library, launch of learning community sessions and development of local-level resources for CCRR use.

### **3.2 Reporting: NDS System Transition**

With the approaching sunset of CCAOA's NDS, Early Learning Indiana – in consultation with OECOSL – will evaluate and implement a solution to bridge the gap to the launch of the state's new permanent replacement system.

### **3.2 Reporting: Support for New State Data System**

Our team will work closely with OECOSL and other stakeholders to advance the work of the new data system. The Early Learning Indiana team will participate in stakeholder meetings, share insights into current data management and desired future improvements and support training and implementation needs across the network.

### **3.5 Surveys: Early Learning Workforce Survey**

The Indiana Early Learning Workforce Survey will help to gauge the scope of the immediate child care workforce issues, and gain insight into current hiring and retention practices within programs. Another key data point that will be obtained through the survey will be assessing the volume of capacity loss that has occurred in the state due to inadequate staffing. We will use this data to design targeted solutions to address the current workforce issues plaguing programs.



## **2.2 Referrals: Early Learning Marketplace Best Practices**

In October, the Early Learning Marketplace will launch as a site for families to find, research and reserve a seat at their early learning program of choice. As providers adopt and utilize the marketplace for managing enrollment, we recognize this will affect the CCRRs approach to providing referral services for families in need of care. To ensure a seamless referral activity, the Early Learning Indiana team will educate the CCRRs on the marketplace's functionality and develop best practices on the use of the marketplace as a source of information for families.

## **2.4 Family Outreach: CCDF Family Communication Enhancements**

Navigating the CCDF application and enrollment process can be a cumbersome task for families. Aligned to the 2Gen framework and in close coordination with OECOSL, the eligibility offices and the CCRRs, Early Learning Indiana will implement a holistic family-focused communications initiative designed to simplify the experience, providing families with the information and education they need to successfully navigate the CCDF process.

## **2.5 Provider Outreach: Marketing Best Practices for CCRR Teams**

To equip programs with the marketing tools needed to be most effective in today's dynamic environment, Early Learning Indiana will create a marketing guide to assist providers in understanding marketing strategies and how to successfully implement those strategies. We will promote the guide within the emerging providers' resource library and to providers more broadly through existing Brighter Futures Indiana channels.

## **3.4 Provider Information: School Age Cost Study**

In 2020, Early Learning Indiana completed a provider cost study, focused on better understanding the operational costs of running early childhood education programs. Upon completion of this project, OECOSL identified an interest in gathering and analyzing similar data for school age programs. Through the follow-up cost study, we will collect additional data from school age programs and provide a summary report, highlighting the key cost drivers and providing insights into how costs vary between early education and school age services.

#### **4.1 Coordination: Community-Specific Marketing Audit**

The Closing the Gap report provides an enhanced perspective on understanding access to early education programs within local communities. To support CCRR marketing efforts in their communities, we will use the report findings and related interactive tools to better understand local access needs. Based on community-specific findings, we will design marketing assets targeted towards the access levels and needs of various communities and provide those findings to the CCRRs for use as a coordinated network campaign.

#### **4.1 Provider Outreach: Provider Journey**

Emerging and existing providers frequently receive services and communications from a variety of state-funded partner organizations. Early Learning Indiana will map the provider experience to capture the myriad touchpoints between network partners and providers. Based on that analysis, we will provide recommendations to enhance the provider experience, identifying opportunities to streamline and strengthen communications. We will also make recommendations for the communications and resources needed specifically for those participating in family child care networks.

#### **4.3 Capacity Building: Capacity-Building Strategies**

With the launch of the Closing the Gap report and related resources, Early Learning Indiana provided a new methodology to measure child care and early education access. Using this report, we will continue our work with the CCRRs to design and execute on capacity-building strategies and provide technical assistance as the CCRRs implement these strategies. Additionally, Early Learning Indiana is prepared to coordinate a new capacity-building initiative should OECOSL be interested in funding an opportunity.

#### **4.3 Capacity-Building: Human-Centered Design Project**

Early Learning Indiana applied for and was accepted into Child Care Aware of America's human-centered design training cohort. The twelve-week cohort experience will focus on understanding and applying human-centered design to address pressing capacity-building issues, building and testing solution prototypes.

#### **4.4 Strategic Services: Paths to Quality™ Marketing Materials Update**

When providers advance a level on Paths to QUALITY™, Early Learning Indiana provides marketing guides containing a variety of resources and information geared towards helping providers market their services to families. Our team will refresh the existing resources and create new materials to strengthen local marketing of the Paths to QUALITY™ recognition system. We will also ensure that updated materials adhere to any policies outlined in the updated version of the Paths to QUALITY™ policy handbook and any changes to the brand guidelines recommended by OECOSL.

## **2.3 Complaints: Complaints Dashboard Creation**

Early Learning Indiana will create a complaints dashboard to provide OECOSL with real-time data insights into recent complaints against providers and track any needed resolutions or action items.

## **2.5 Provider Outreach: Marketing Best Practices for Families**

Building on our work providing marketing guidance for programs as they recruit new staff, Early Learning Indiana will focus on family-facing marketing activities, establishing best practices for providers as they review their program characteristics and desired customer base to build targeted marketing strategies.

## **2.6 Community Outreach: Working with Coalitions**

Early Learning Indiana will provide technical assistance and share best practices to advance the CCRRs efforts in building local coalitions and engaging in existing coalitions in support of high-quality early learning opportunities. We will host strategy sessions to identify potential coalitions and develop communication assets to facilitate consistent sharing of network-wide messages with local stakeholders.

## **3.2 Reporting: Redesign of ELI Data Center**

The Early Learning Indiana Data Center initially launched as a resource for dashboards, county profiles and quick statewide and local statistics related to early care and education. With the redesign of the Brighter Futures Indiana website, an opportunity exists to refresh and realign the data center to the three core CCRR audiences – families, providers and community partners. Early Learning Indiana will conduct a comprehensive content review, revise based on current needs and integrate the data center into existing websites rather than as a standalone site.

## **3.5 Surveys: Survey Results Insights and Review**

The CCRR Network now has a collection of survey templates to gather information from families, providers and community partners. On a quarterly basis, Early Learning Indiana will facilitate sessions with data specialists to review and analyze survey results, champion data visualizations and utilize other tools to enhance understanding and sharing of data.

## 4.1 Coordination: Data Specialist Toolkit

CCRR Data Engagement Specialists lead data collection efforts and support data-driven decisions at the local level. To empower specialists to leverage best practices and lead the network in strategic data management, Early Learning Indiana will build a resource toolkit. The toolkit assets will help ensure consistency across the network, provide training for the adoption of new tools and support specialists in continuous quality improvement efforts.

## 4.1 Coordination: CCRR Onboarding Trainings

In the upcoming year, Early Learning Indiana will build the new training pathways for CCRR team members, focusing on creating course content on Indiana Learning Paths designed to accelerate new CCRR team members' time to productivity. The new trainings will also serve as resources for current CCRR team members who simply need a refresher on specific network or general early care and education content, or who desire professional development opportunities to level up their knowledge of the industry.





# Appendix

## General

Contract Area	Deliverables
1.1 Annual Planning	Year One implementation plan
	Two-day, Year One kick off meeting with OECOSL, ELI and CCRR team members
	Year Two implementation plan
	Monthly contract reports and review meetings with OECOSL
1.3 Network Policies and Procedures	CCRR Handbook created, detailing key systems and processes across the network
	New policies and procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family referrals</li> <li>• Program complaints</li> <li>• Emerging program documentation</li> <li>• Updates to NDS manual</li> <li>• CCRR trainer policies</li> <li>• CCRR documentation guide, outlining CCRR NDS and TTAM data entry</li> </ul>
	Family referral process updates, with new team member guide created to support

## Family Referral and Community Outreach

Contract Area	Deliverables
2.1 Consumer Education	ZenDesk implementation for Solution Center work
	Solution Center ticket dashboard
	Solution Center ticket analysis

# Family Referral and Community Outreach

Contract Area	Deliverables
2.1 Consumer Education	Solution Center team member handbook
	Early Ed Connect help site and launch support
	It's A New Day campaign, introducing the new ECE system changes
	Preschool Development Grant highlights
	Let's Get Back to Work consumer and provider confidence campaign
	Regularly refreshed Brighter Futures website content and social promotions
	Brighter Futures site assessment and survey research
	Brighter Futures site update recommendations
	Restructured and refreshed Brighter Futures site design, featuring content for families, providers and partners
	Phone, email and chat support for <i>Build, Learn, Grow</i> initiatives
	Creation of BuildLearnGrow.org section of Brighter Futures Indiana website
2.2 Referrals	Updated referral procedures
	Guide to Referrals and accompanying live training and implementation support for CCRR teams

## Family Referral and Community Outreach

Contract Area	Deliverables
2.3 Complaints	Complaint handling policies and procedures
	Related complaint handling trainings
	Ongoing complaint analyses
2.4 Family Outreach	Early Ed Connect user support plan, including live support and online knowledge base
	On My Way Pre-K promotions, in partnership with FSSA
	Let's Get Back to Work campaign materials and promotions
	<i>Build, Learn, Grow</i> website, communications and scholarship implementation
	<i>Enhancing the Role of CCRRs as a Navigator in the Two-Generational Approach to Family Engagement</i> proposal and initial planning with CCRRs
2.5 Provider Outreach	Monthly I-LEAD Connect/Brighter Futures Bulletin newsletters
	Maintenance and refreshed articles for I-LEAD support site
	COVID-19 crisis communications and related webinar promotions
	Creation of COVID-19 ad hoc data collection tools
	Provider guide featured in Let's Get Back to Work campaign
	<i>A Fundamental Capacity-Building Strategy: Effectively Recruiting and Onboarding High-Quality Providers</i>

## Family Referral and Community Outreach

Contract Area	Deliverables
2.5 Provider Outreach	Partnership with Infancy Onward to support expansion of mental health endorsements for providers
	Anything But a Small Business new provider recruitment landing page
2.6 Community Outreach	Business Engagement Toolkit materials
	Business Engagement Toolkit unpacking sessions and related technical assistance
	<i>Building Support for a Recovering Early Learning Sector</i>
	Pop-up care interest data collection form
	Pop-up care resources, updates to resources to reflect new school age guidance
	<i>Engaging Communities to Support Early Care and Education</i>
	Community engagement and event toolkit
	Community engagement toolkit unpacking sessions and related technical assistance
	<i>No Small Matter</i> module viewing series
ELI and CCRR joint event planning sessions	

## Central Database Management & Quality Assurance

Contract Area	Deliverables
3.1 General	Software use documentation
3.2 Reporting	CCRR scorecard creation
	CCRR scorecard reporting guide and related trainings
	CCRRCO scorecard creation
	Quality assurance dashboard creation
	Quality assurance implementation plan
	CCRR Year One annual report template creation
	CCRRCO Year One annual report
	Enhanced NDS dashboard
	QPR-related data requests
	CCRR Year Two annual report template creation
3.3 Training Platform	Indiana Learning Paths site administration
	ILP site analysis
	Continued coordination with I-LEAD and Indiana Learning Paths technical partners
3.4 Provider Information	Provider update procedures and related training
	Provider update campaign monitoring
	Online update tool

## Central Database Management & Quality Assurance

Contract Area	Deliverables
3.4 Provider Information	Cost study implementation and final report
	2020 market rate dataset
3.5 Surveys	Referral satisfaction survey
	45-day referral follow up
	Parent workshop/event evaluations
	Orientation evaluations
	Provider closure survey
	Individualized support and technical assistance feedback
	Community stakeholders survey
	Program/directors survey
	Employer involvement survey
	Parents in early learning survey results compilation
Year Two revisions to all active surveys	

## CCRR Coordination, Training, Technical Assistance and Support

Contract Area	Deliverables
4.1 Coordination	CCRR onboarding sessions
	It's A New Day change management toolkit
	HUB intranet launch

## CCRR Coordination, Training, Technical Assistance and Support

Contract Area	Deliverables
4.1 Coordination	CCRR strategic planning process
	Program director and peer learning meetings
	Network-building plan and work group creation
	Network coordination work group assessment
	Brand playbook development
	CCRR onboarding and training proposal
	COVID-19 related coordination, including training on new data supports and provider grant outreach materials
	Launch of CCRR Network brand
	Brand Builder implementation and asset creation
	<i>Build, Learn, Grow</i> Facebook Live events with CCRR Network
4.2 Planning and Monitoring	Participation in CCRR monthly contract review calls
	CCRR performance measures support and historic data
	CCRR self-reflection (onsite monitoring) plan
	Reflective feedback survey results overview
4.3 Capacity Building	Indiana CARES About Child Care plan development
	CARES provider and partner webpages
	CARES eligibility and application process documentation

## CCRR Coordination, Training, Technical Assistance and Support

Contract Area	Deliverables
4.3 Capacity Building	CARES data dashboard
	<i>Closing the Gap</i> report and interactive maps
4.4 Strategic Services	Paths to QUALITY™ management recommendations
	Ongoing Paths to QUALITY™ operations
	Resources created for the Indiana Head Start Collaborative Office
	Communications strategy train-the-trainer sessions with CCRRs
<b>Innovation</b>	
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brighter Futures site enhancement recommendations</li> <li>• Let's Get Back to Work campaign</li> <li>• Building Support for a Recovering Early Learning Sector proposal</li> </ul>