



Child Care
Resource and
Referral Network

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ANSWERS

2021 - 2022

Annual Report

CHILD CARE
ANSWERS





LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we wrap up our first full year as an independent organization, I want to express how proud I am of the Child Care Answers (CCA) team and Board of Directors. This year's effort and dedication are admirable and have not gone unnoticed. The extra calls, last-minute changes to plans, and the need for 'all-hands-on-deck' situations are building our resilience as a flexible team. As our world changes, so must the way we work. We continue to pivot our delivery of services through listening to our clients, internal collaboration, and learning from those around us. Current and new technology has assisted us in better and more innovative ways to communicate, offer support, gather data, and reach new people. We are making solid strides towards eliminating the idea that Child Care Answers is the best-kept secret in central Indiana.

During the fall and winter, we received funds to support immigrant families and assist with child care costs through a grant from ICHLA. CCA also hosted a panel with Hendricks County leaders, highlighting the need for quality early care and education and celebrating accomplishments in the county. The spring brought a flurry of activity reminiscent of pre-COVID-19. In our first large-scale, face-to-face event since 2019, CCA partnered on the *Be My Neighbor Day* event, which brought almost 900 people to the Central Library to learn and explore. In May, three staff attended the Child Care Aware of America conference in Washington, D.C., where they met with Senators Braun and Young. We shared our families' stories as they navigated the early education landscape, invited them to join us on visits to child care programs, and offered our data and education services. Spring and summer were also times for celebration. We hosted a child care provider appreciation event, filling their buckets with self-care items and delicious treats while engaging in conversation to thank them for their hard work and dedication during challenging times. On July 3, we celebrated our first full year as an independent organization, reflecting on how far we had come, the people we served, and our perseverance as a team.

The data you will see in this report on CCA's work shows astounding outcomes for central Indiana. We more than doubled the number of families we served, connected with more child care providers than ever, and increased our business relationships by over 100%, all while maintaining and creating mutually-beneficial relationships in the central Indiana community. The numbers are astonishing but not surprising. I witness the determination and passion of this team, rising to the challenge and ensuring positive impact and growth.

As we look toward the future, there is a lot at stake. We must be intentional and make outcome-driven plans, be innovative, and take bold steps to support families and child care providers in central Indiana. The Child Care Answers team has and will continue to be committed to ensuring the essential is accessible to all.

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OVERVIEW



QUICK STATS

2,682

Families served

4,915

Interactions

Families are often repeat customers, taking advantage of many services including help finding child care, one-on-one parenting support, guidance on financial assistance, workshops, and referrals to community resources.

257

Emerging
providers
served

Future child care business owners rely on services such as learning communities, networking opportunities, onsite support, mock inspections, and help completing their licensing or registration applications.

6,164

Current
provider
interactions

Established child care programs get the latest news and resources to improve the quality of their programs, including grant support and referrals to resources for staffing and professional development.

212

Employers

618

Interactions

Employers receive consultations and data on how to improve their bottom line through family-friendly policies and benefits. Working parents also receive targeted support and education.

475

Community
partner
relationships

Community agencies & partners create mutually beneficial opportunities for families and child care programs in central Indiana. As a navigator, CCA staff connects families in need to organizations.

INDIANA CCR&R NETWORK MISSION

To strengthen Indiana's local early care and education infrastructure by connecting families to quality care, supporting providers, building capacity and engaging community leaders as advocates for high-quality, affordable early care and education.

OVERVIEW

Child Care Answers: A data-driven organization

To ensure we meet community needs, CCA uses data to inform our work and to share with others, demonstrating the need and impact of child care in our community. Here's just a sample of how:



Programs: Using Early Learning Indiana's *Closing the Gap* report to identify the highest-need areas, CCA guides those opening a child care or looking to expand. We gather rate information from programs, which informs how much to charge for their services. As programs write grants, the support CCA provides includes data about the need in a program's localized area.



Community partners: While community partners and social service organizations generally understand the essential need for child care in central Indiana, CCA continues to use neighborhood-level data to inform and guide local decision-makers. Our website and *Early Learning Matters* booklet outline county-specific metrics in clear, visual ways to enable communities to share.

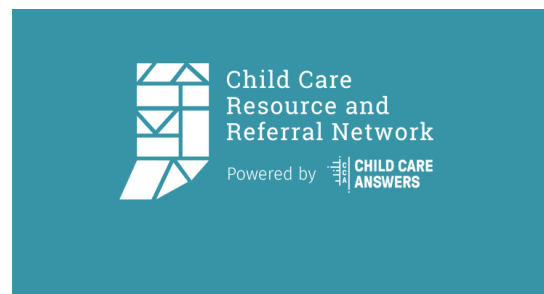
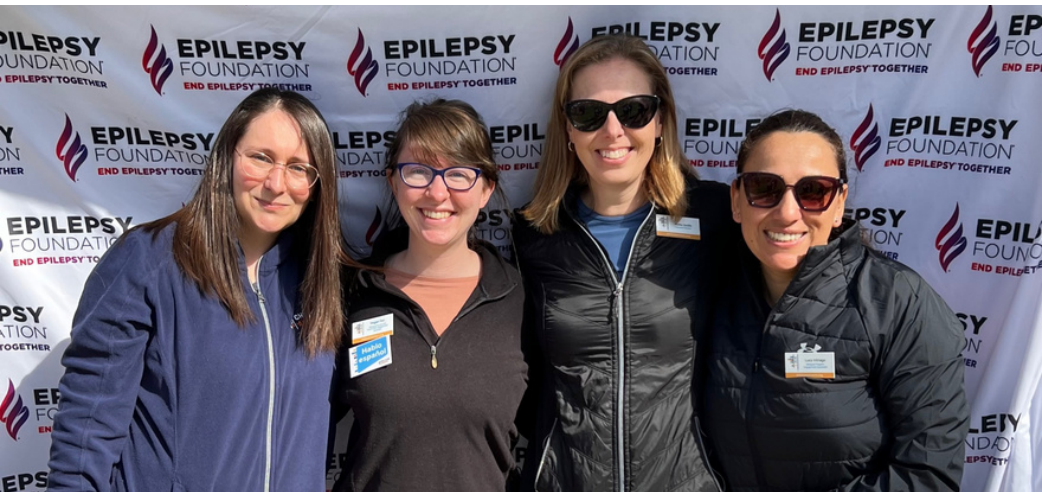


Families: As we served over 2,500 families this year, we internally tracked trends to uncover common needs for families, how they prefer to connect with us, and barriers. We are then able to use that data to inform our goals and strategies as we look to more broadly serve as many central Indiana families as possible.



Businesses: *Closing the Gap* makes it easy for CCA to highlight the importance of child care for working families and how it impacts businesses directly. We also assist employers in administering their own surveys so that they can use data from their individual firms to make informed decisions about family-friendly policies and benefits.





ACCESS



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Early Learning Access Index

Early Learning Indiana's *Closing the Gap* report provides eye-opening insights into the state of child care in central Indiana. Compared to other counties, Marion County dropped slightly, and Hendricks fell to the bottom half of the state; however, Hamilton moved up two spots. The Early Learning Access Index (ELAI) considers:

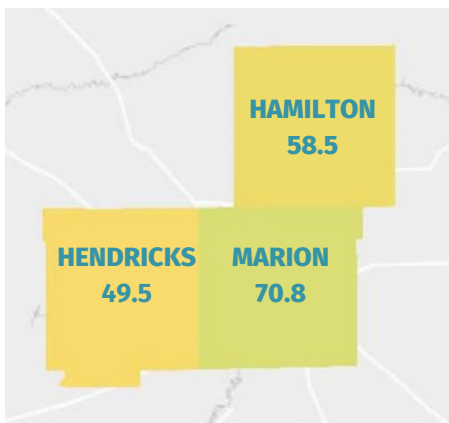
Capacity: The Capacity Index tells us what percentage of children who need care can be served by a child care program near their residence. The biggest opportunity for improvement shows up in Hendricks County, where only around a third of children who need it can access care close to home.

Quality: The Quality Index generally shows the percentage of regulated child care programs that are considered to be high-quality, which is defined as Paths to QUALITY™ levels three or four. Marion County continues to lead the way in this area with Hamilton and Hendricks not far behind.

Affordability: The Affordability Index roughly shows which percentage of income a family has left over to pay for other needs after taking out the cost of child care. Marion County residents pay the largest percentage of their incomes toward child care, which likely reflects that the lower cost of care does not make up for the lower household income compared to surrounding counties.

	Hamilton	Hendricks	Marion
ELAI Indiana Rank	27	58	4
Capacity Index	53.0	37.7	100.0
Quality Index	46.4	36.8	53.9
Affordability Index	82.1	78.3	66.0
Choice Index	61.2	57.4	57.0

Early Learning Access Index in Central Indiana



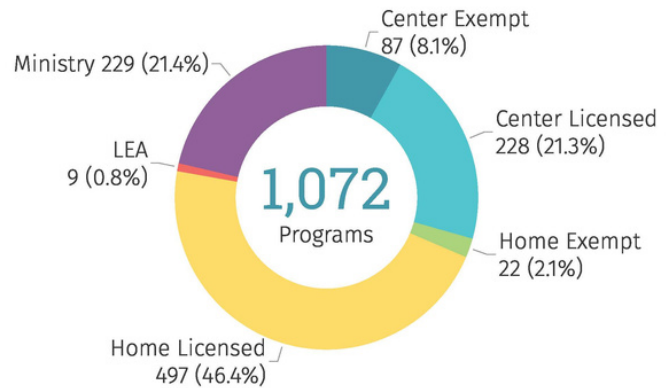
Choice: While slightly more complicated to define, the Choice Index takes into consideration infant/toddler care availability, variation in types of care, and availability of non-traditional hours. The Choice Index tracks counties on a zero to 100 scale, with zero reflecting no choice and 100 reflecting a plethora of options for families in choosing care.

Behind each of the above numbers are thousands of families encountering challenges that may not be reflected more broadly in the data. In the following pages of this report, we hope to address some of these factors in more detail.

Programs

Central Indiana ended the year with 26 more programs, thanks to new family child care homes and registered ministries. These care types make up 82% of CCA's case load, which we directly support with site visits, mock inspections, application support, and learning communities. As COVID-19-related issues waned, time to obtain a license also decreased through better access to background checks and shortened wait times

for licensing requirements. The number of high-quality programs (Paths to QUALITY™ levels three and four) increased in Marion County, were steady in Hamilton County, but decreased in Hendricks County. See page 13 for details.



CCA supports creation of new programs through community ties in areas of high need. This year, we focused efforts on Indianapolis' far east side in cooperation with the Business Ownership Initiative. The new justice complex created new jobs and therefore a new need for child care. To anticipate this need, CCA formed a partnership with Southeast Community Center to collaborate on a cohort encouraging entrepreneurs to open family child care homes in this area. Last year, seven new programs opened in the 46203 zip code. Hendricks County added three new programs in northeast Hendricks County zip code 46112, which has capacity needs.

Overall closures also decreased, with 68 fewer programs closing than last year. The clouds began to clear from COVID-19, and a plethora of grants for child care programs, such as *Build, Learn, Grow* also supported this decrease. Grant dollars not only supported the health of businesses, but many also required programs to stay open for a year to accept the awards. CCA provided outreach and direct support to programs with questions about the different grant opportunities and how to apply.

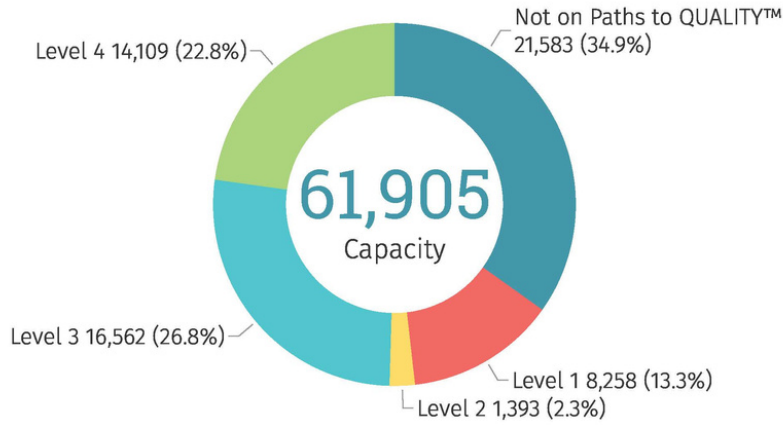
Despite the overall decrease in closures, some programs did close due to COVID-19 stressors, staffing issues, and lack of business knowledge. CCA worked closely with displaced families when programs closed, helping them find other options for care. In some instances, larger high-quality programs left a huge supply gap in an area with no equivalent options available for miles. For example, nine programs closed in the southeast Fishers area, where there was already a lack of capacity. In working with agencies that also support families, CCA stressed to our partners the importance of families getting on waitlists. We also created a resource on nannies and education on how families can fill in the gap until children were pulled from a waitlist.

Many programs, especially family child care homes, were forced to close due to landlords or home owners' associations (HOAs) that no longer allow child care programs to operate in their neighborhood. CCA provides education about this barrier to every emerging provider we support, encouraging them to check with landlords or HOAs before renting or buying in the hopes of avoiding this issue in the future.

CCA Success Story

During COVID-19, Auntie Mame's, a large center in a high-need area, closed. This left many families displaced. CCA provided direct support to Sabrina Cooper as she purchased the building and quickly opened up Nana's Childcare and Preschool in its place. This new program added high-quality care, programming, and much-needed services such as infant care, school-age care, and transportation.

Capacity Building



Capacity increased 5% this year. Many large centers with multiple locations closed their doors during the pandemic and began reopening, including many of the larger after-school programs. Grant funding was especially helpful to these centers, allowing them to purchase materials or fund new classrooms.

Despite the overall increase in capacity, we continued to see many individual programs navigate challenges with capacity in classrooms. During conversations with programs, most

of them told CCA they were struggling to find and keep staff; many shuttered classrooms to avoid having to close their programs altogether. In these situations, CCA referred struggling programs to partners at Indiana AEYC and SPARK Learning Lab to get the help they need.

One of the most important ways that CCA has a direct impact on capacity is through work with emerging programs, which are creating new seats in new child care businesses. To connect with those who might be interested in starting their own child care business, CCA attended a number of networking events with potential entrepreneurs. We also used partnerships with higher education partners such as Ivy Tech and the University of Indianapolis to identify those who already have a budding interest in early childhood education. In the last year, CCA worked with 257 individuals to whom we provided one-on-one support to get their child care businesses up and running.

CCA works to overcome a number of barriers for those opening a child care business. Start-up funding remains an issue, and those who weren't already operating a child care business were not eligible for many of last year's grants. To overcome this, CCA researched alternative options for loans, partnering with the Business Ownership Initiative to ensure entrepreneurs' eligibility for these loans. It is also increasingly difficult to secure a location due to low supply in the real estate market, high rents, and high mortgage rates. Even when one can find a place, cost of materials for home improvements and inability to find contractors is increasingly hard to overcome.

Program and Capacity Changes by County

County	New Programs	New Capacity	Programs Closed	Capacity Closed	Net Program Change	Net Capacity Change
Hamilton	16	1,426	20	1,277	-4	149
Hendricks	11	298	6	197	5	101
Marion	133	4,416	128	3,975	5	441
Total	160	6,140	154	5,449	6	691

Orientation Trainings and One-on-One Support

Whether during phone calls or at in-person events, emerging providers often ask CCA the question, "What type of program should I start?" While we provide high-level information, CCA staff direct most people to take Orientation 1 first. This high-level training encourages providers to make their own decision about which type of care to open, based on their needs and experience. Offered online in English, CCA also conducts this training live in Spanish in coordination with Geminus.

While the number of people who took orientation trainings dropped in the last year, it is likely for a positive reason. Orientation 1 and 2 moved online a few years ago, and many staff at existing programs took the orientation trainings to fulfill professional development requirements. Through education by CCA staff and clear direction on CCA's website, many child care professionals are now instead taking more appropriate online trainings offered through SPARK Learning Lab on the Indiana Learning Paths system.

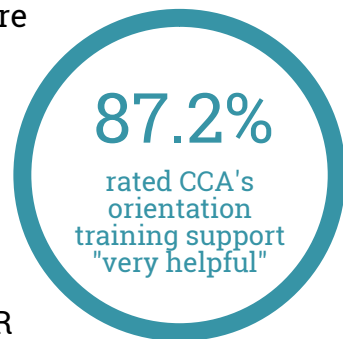
Thanks to the marketing campaign developed by Early Learning Indiana, CCA and our early childhood education partners were able to easily guide those interested in opening a child care program directly to Indiana Learning Paths to register for orientation courses. CCA calls each person who completed Orientation 2 to offer our one-one-supports. From this outreach, CCA was able to develop a case load of programs, serving 65 programs each month on average.

Orientation 1 Overview of child care in Indiana

469
Completions

Orientation 2 Child Care Homes OR Ministries OR Centers

300
Completions



Emerging Providers Served

257

Received onsite support, mock inspections, help completing applications, and more from CCA

Licensed/registered providers

162

Became licensed or registered in the 2021-22 contract year with CCA's support

CCA Success Story

Through a partnership with the Burmese American Community Institute (BACI), CCA staff organized an initiative that will include in-person facilitation of Orientation I and II by CCA staff with the assistance of a translator. Following completion of the course, participants will receive one-on-one support from CCA staff to help them build their child care businesses.

Learning Communities

Whether they are just starting out down the road to licensing or have been operating for years, child care professionals need and love to network with each other. In addition to educational opportunities focusing on topics relating to opening a child care, CCA works with Early Learning Indiana to provide opportunities for those working towards licensing or registration to connect with others like them throughout the state.

Those who are planning to open a child care business are often juggling a "day job" with the complexities of opening a regulated business. Because of this, attendance at learning communities can be unpredictable. To address this, CCA created a process that includes a clearly-outlined schedule, frequent communication, and flexibility during meetings so emerging providers could more regularly attend. Thanks to this diligence, as well as marketing support from Early Learning Indiana, CCA was able to attract 15 individuals to attend the statewide learning community and 29 in the local community last year, which is steady from our cohort participation last year.



15

Statewide learning
community attendance
from CCA's delivery area



29

Local learning
community attendance

CCA Success Story

CCA recently celebrated with Hope & Joy Academy as they became registered as a child care ministry in Hendricks County. CCA became acquainted with owner Starla Haggard through the statewide learning community. As an experienced licensed child care home provider, Starla brought a valued perspective to the local learning community and served as a mentor to others. Congratulations, Hope & Joy Academy!

There are a number of opportunities and barriers that are unique to central Indiana, so CCA facilitates additional learning communities that focus on those opening in Marion, Hamilton, and Hendricks counties.

In this close-knit group, emerging providers are able to not only share highs and lows but also business opportunities. Being able to find materials and contractors to install the fencing required by licensing is a chief hurdle for those opening a family child care home. CCA was working closely with a program that had success with a local fencing company and was able to connect this program to others in the local community who were also able to take advantage of this much-needed service.

CCA is also privileged to be able to learn from those in the learning communities. By hearing the struggles and successes, we can work to identify resources and opportunities not only for those in the learning communities but also for all programs that we serve.

Support for Established Programs

Referrals to Early Childhood Partners



345

Provider Updates

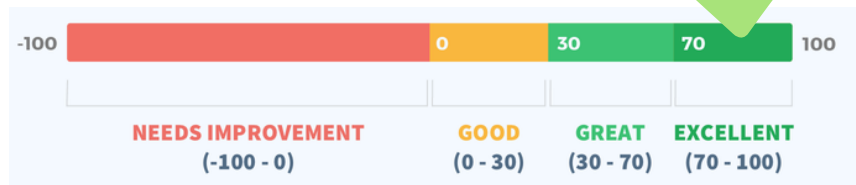
Number of times CCA connected with programs to discuss the details of their program, plus additional needs

Child Care Answers chiefly supports newly-licensed/registered and established programs with referrals and awareness of other resources to encourage increased capacity and high-quality care. One of the ways we are able to engage with established programs is through provider update phone calls. The main purpose for these calls is to ensure that we have the most up-to-date and accurate information for our databases to share with families in search of child care. We also use these calls as an opportunity to engage professionals to understand their needs and desires for Paths to QUALITY™, membership in local organizations, professional development, higher education, and the Child Development Associate (CDA) and other credentials.

In 2019, CCA stopped supporting programs directly with professional development and coaching, but many of those relationships were so strong that programs continued to come to us with questions outside of our new services. In these situations, we answered simple questions and directed them to known resources. For more complicated situations, we referred programs to our partners who now perform this work, SPARK Learning Lab and Indiana AEYC. To ease this process for programs, CCA took efforts to lessen the need for a "middle man." We advertised partner resources in our quarterly program newsletters. We also expanded our website resources, which allowed us to easily email links rather than spend time with already-busy professionals on the phone to explain where they could find information. Our use of Google AdWords also allowed many programs searching for this information to find what they needed in the moment, without needing to make an additional phone call.

Through increased use of texting and short-form video, CCA saw an 84% increase in responses to its 2022 Provider Satisfaction Survey. The combined audience of established and emerging programs gave us a net promoter score of 79, an improvement from a "great" score of 59 last year to "excellent" this year.

79



High-Quality Care

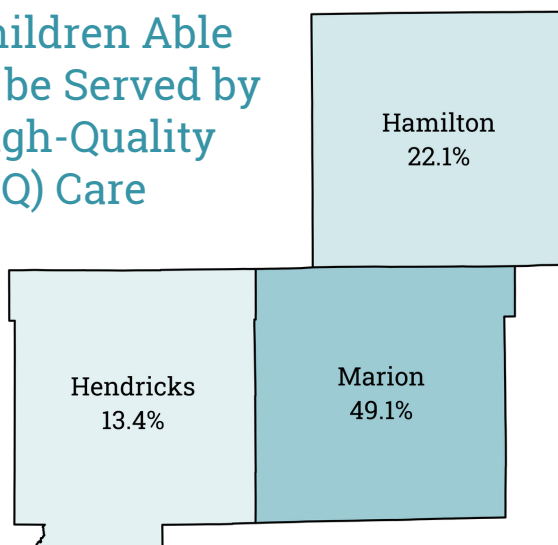
Indiana defines high-quality care as programs that are level three or level four on Paths to QUALITY™, Indiana's quality rating improvement system.

As families come to CCA for help finding and choosing child care, we provide a number of resources to educate them on Paths to QUALITY™, including web and print resources, workshops, and information in every email we send to families requesting help finding child care. Because of this, families are requesting high-quality care as CCA conducts child care searches; however, we are finding it harder and harder to find openings in high-quality programs. As of September 2022, high-quality programs in Hamilton and Hendricks counties had no immediate openings for infants and toddlers, with only one program having space for a two-year-old. Due to the sheer number of programs, things looked slightly better in Marion County, yet, less than 20% of high-quality programs have immediate openings for infants.

Paths to QUALITY™ education is also part of the orientation process as we assist those preparing to open a child care business. These emerging programs are more likely to join Paths to QUALITY™ after they have solidified their businesses.

As CCA talks with established programs, we find that many are still navigating the system change with new Paths to QUALITY™ coaching supports and relationships. Others simply indicate lack of time to identify areas for improvement and implement them. Because of this, some are choosing to either downgrade their Paths to QUALITY™ level (levels one and two are not considered high quality) or no longer participate in the Paths to QUALITY™ program. Others have indicated during SPARK Regional Advisory Council meetings that they are struggling to meet requirements to stay qualified for Paths to QUALITY™ levels three and four, causing them to drop levels. For example, Paths to QUALITY™ requires certain education levels for a percentage of staff. Because of staffing shortages, programs are not able to be selective about who they hire, which brings the education percentage below Paths to QUALITY™ requirements. We look forward to sharing more with programs as SPARK Learning Lab develops resources to assist providers in meeting these Paths to QUALITY™ requirements.

Children Able to be Served by High-Quality (HQ) Care



84,456

Children Who May Need Care

30,671

High-Quality Capacity

36.3%

Able to be Served by High-Quality Care

High-Quality (HQ) Care by County

County	Total Programs	HQ Programs	Percent HQ Programs	Total Capacity	HQ Capacity	Percent HQ Capacity
Hamilton	119	38	31.9%	12,155	5,540	45.6%
Hendricks	73	15	20.5%	5,007	1,934	38.6%
Marion	880	295	33.5%	44,743	23,197	51.8%
Total	1,072	348	32.5%	61,905	30,671	49.5%

In central Indiana this last year, 4% more families needed child care, but high-quality program capacity decreased by 2%. While high-quality care went up or remained steady in Marion and Hamilton counties, the gap widened even more in Hendricks County, with seven less programs providing high-quality care than last year.

Hendricks County likely continues to struggle with high-quality availability for a few reasons. Staffing continues to be a major hurdle for all programs, but, being in a rural area, Hendricks programs may find it even more challenging to recruit qualified teachers. Hendricks also lacks formalized supports that providers in other counties can access, such as the Early Learning Alliance Network in Hamilton and a wide number of networking opportunities and resources in Marion County.

Because high-quality supply is low in Hendricks, spots fill up quickly, which makes it difficult for families to secure. As of September 2022, none of Hendricks County's high-quality programs had openings for infants or toddlers, and only one had availability for school-agers.

To address this gap in Hendricks County, CCA encouraged collaboration to create high-quality care by targeting specific thought leaders and organizations. Last fall, we conducted the *Summit on Early Learning* in Hendricks County and engaged businesses and community organizations such as the Brownsburg Chamber, the Hendricks County Community Foundation, and the Hendricks County Alliance for Diversity, among many others. In 2023, CCA plans a targeted media campaign in Hendricks County to increase awareness of our services.

While educating about Paths to QUALITY™ is one way to improve overall quality of child care and access to quality care, CCA takes a holistic approach to quality to ensure central Indiana's youngest children are able to receive the level of care that they deserve.

Families can access a number of on-demand resources through CCA's website that educate on what to look for when choosing a child care program. Staff used this information to share with families when completing child care referrals, individual supports, and connections with families at events and workshops. We also strive to empower families with the knowledge that they have choices in their child care. Quality looks different for every family - especially when you take into account cultural differences.

Much of the support and education CCA delivers to child care programs focuses not just on what is required for licensing but what will help the program go above and beyond for the children and families they serve. For example, CCA recently collaborated with Geminus to guide emerging providers on how to create handbooks; this type of advice is prevalent in learning communities.

CCA also engages with organizations that align with our mission of educating families about quality child care, connecting with them through meetings and events. Through these avenues, CCA can also educate partners that families need to start searching for care early, including getting on waitlists, in order to secure high-quality care.

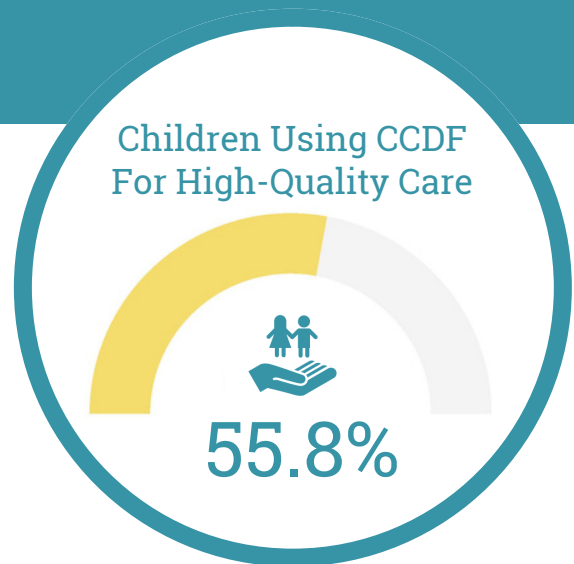
CCDF Care & CCDF Outreach

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) vouchers are a powerful tool to assist low-income families in not only being able to afford care but also creating access to high-quality programs. CCA is integral in connecting CCDF families to high-quality child care through our outreach efforts in conjunction with our local CCDF voucher offices, now Firefly and previously Maximus. We are also proud to be a part of the pilot program in Marion County which allows families to access CCDF supports via 211. CCA staff reach out on a regular basis as navigators to assist families in completing their paperwork submission requirements. During this time, we also educate on the importance of high-quality care and bring awareness to our free supports in finding a program. When families come to CCA on their own (outside of outreach from Firefly), we ask specifics about their income levels. This allows us to introduce them to the option of CCDF and other financial supports for which they may qualify.

Many programs, although eligible to accept CCDF vouchers, choose not to enroll CCDF families. For those that do accept CCDF families, many choose not to enroll them in favor of private-pay families, who can give more accurate start dates and don't have to wait for funding to start. CCA encourages and educates programs on the importance of CCDF, but many cite additional paperwork, card maintenance, or costs above and beyond the CCDF rate as reasons for why they limit the number of CCDF families they accept. They also express difficulty with state requirements that limit the number of CCDF families who can be enrolled based on overall capacity, not available spots per shift. As we learn about these issues, we share with our partners to facilitate ways to address these challenges. We also educate programs on the importance of reporting their tuition rates, because this market rate data informs the CCDF reimbursement rate.

Of programs that accept vouchers, many are not high-quality (Paths to QUALITY™ level three or four). Even then, openings in high-quality programs are often hard to find. As of September 2022, all Hendricks County high-quality programs had waitlists for infants. Finding a high-quality program within the required two-week time-frame is a struggle, which leads many to choose programs that are not Level 3 or 4. If families on the CCDF waitlist are fortunate enough to find a high-quality program with openings, many choose not to enroll because they cannot afford care until after their voucher begins. Others don't want to switch programs.

Staff worked closely with community agencies to educate and make them aware of CCDF news or changes, especially as the *Build, Learn, Grow* initiative opened up eligibility to even more Hoosier families. CCA cannot provide direct application support to families due to confidentiality reasons; however, we guide and support community partners on how to do so, referring many to Brighter Futures Indiana. In the case of non-English speaking families, we can support the community partner with tips and best practices on application support, as well as making them aware of ways to overcome communication challenges that may arise from CCDF documentation not being in the family's preferred language.



CCDF Family Outreach

3,287

Attempts by Child Care Answers to connect with families by phone, email, or in-person

Families connected to CCDF

973

Families Child Care Answers served by answering questions or referring to the CCDF voucher office

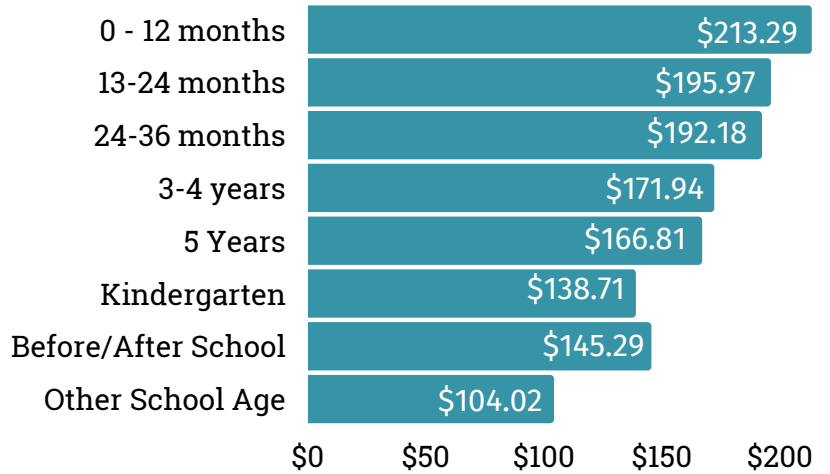
Affordability

Not surprisingly, cost of care gets less expensive as children get older. A family of an infant can expect to pay 28% more than for a five-year-old. Mostly due to the strict four-to-one ratio requirement for infants, babies also often require equipment and supplies above and beyond what older children need. The cost of care increased more than 4% in all five-and-under care except for preschool care at 3.88%.

The cost of care data is self-reported by child care providers as CCA conducts phone calls for provider updates. Program staff are telling us they must

increase the rates they charge families for a number of reasons relating to the recession. Inflation is a major issue for all Hoosiers; programs are also needing to pay more for supplies and services. In order to compete with rising wages in competitive service jobs, owners and administrators must pay more to retain and attract staff. Staff are not likely to stay in a program if they don't feel supported, so programs are also needing to spend more on professional development and morale-building programs.

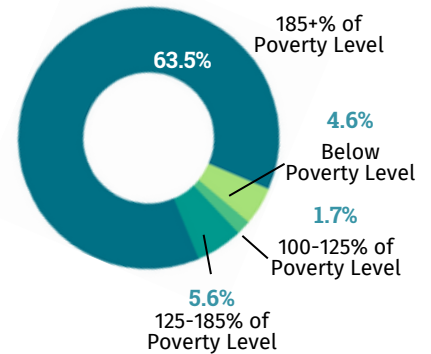
Average Weekly Cost of Care in Central Indiana



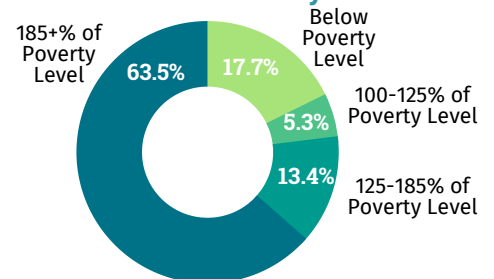
Affordability by County

Affordability often corresponds with the average income in each county. Some Hamilton County families, where less than 5% of young children live in poverty, can much more easily afford care. Compare that to Marion County, where nearly 18% of children live in poverty and where household income is 43% less. CCA will continue its work creating and promoting resources to help families find financial assistance so that they can afford care.

Hamilton and Hendricks



Marion County



	Hamilton	Hendricks	Marion
Median Family Income U.S. Census, 2021	\$128,699	\$104,447	\$72,485
2022 Annual Full-Time Rate	\$9,804	\$9,263	\$9,635
2022 Cost-to-income ratio	7.6%	8.8%	13.2%
2021 Annual Full-Time Rate	\$9,441	\$8,888	\$9,281

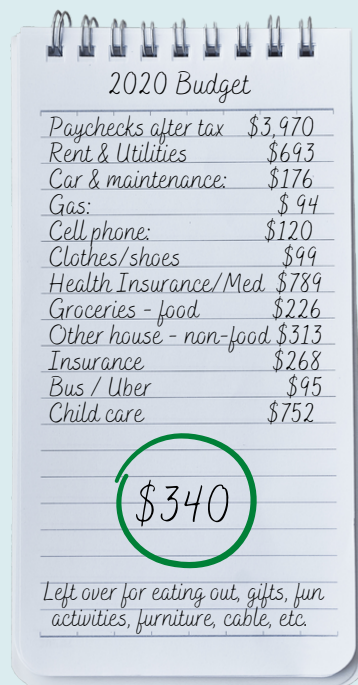
Effects of the economy on families' ability to pay for care

As the cost of care rises, the need for financial supports beyond CCDF vouchers grows even more. Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) families are most notably affected because they do not qualify for low-income subsidies; yet, they often can't afford to make ends meet while also paying for high-quality child care. Immigrant families, most of whose first language is not English, also struggle. Many may not have appropriate documentation to qualify for certain financial assistance programs. For those with limited English skills, it is difficult for them to navigate the system. Even explaining that child care is not free can be difficult for those with experience otherwise. To ensure that families clearly understand the requirements and process, CCA offers its full suite of services in Spanish, publishes content on our website in several languages, partners with LUNA Language Services for translation, and leverages translation apps and volunteer translators.

Families are also adversely affected by inflation and the recession. As costs for transportation, groceries, and health care are rising, that leaves less in their pockets to pay for high-quality child care. CCA takes a proactive stance on routing families to other types of financial assistance where possible to free up income for child care. CCA prides itself on strong relationships with community partners in order to make warm hand-offs to families. Findhelp is also a valuable tool that both CCA and families can use to identify other resources.

A Case Study: Jenny's monthly budget, including child care

Let's take a look at Jenny's monthly budgets, one from Fall 2020, the other from Fall 2021. Her budget reflects the average spending of an Indiana family (according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analytics), and her monthly income is the average of Marion County families, according to U.S. Census figures. Not being able to afford high-quality care, she paid the average cost of care for her toddler son, Ryder, in 2020. She welcomed a daughter, Fiona, in 2021, returning to work six weeks later, and now needs care for both children.

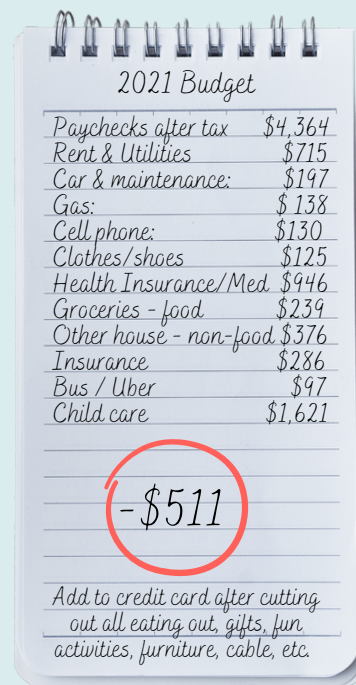


2020 Budget

Paychecks after tax	\$3,970
Rent & Utilities	\$693
Car & maintenance:	\$176
Gas:	\$94
Cell phone:	\$120
Clothes/shoes	\$99
Health Insurance/Med.	\$789
Groceries - food	\$226
Other house - non-food	\$313
Insurance	\$268
Bus / Uber	\$95
Child care	\$752

\$340

Left over for eating out, gifts, fun activities, furniture, cable, etc.



2021 Budget

Paychecks after tax	\$4,364
Rent & Utilities	\$715
Car & maintenance:	\$197
Gas:	\$138
Cell phone:	\$130
Clothes/shoes	\$125
Health Insurance/Med.	\$946
Groceries - food	\$239
Other house - non-food	\$376
Insurance	\$286
Bus / Uber	\$97
Child care	\$1,621

-\$511

Add to credit card after cutting out all eating out, gifts, fun activities, furniture, cable, etc.





CCA was honored to share and support the *Build, Learn, Grow* initiative for both child care programs and families. Through social media and the website, CCA worked to spread the word to as many people as possible.

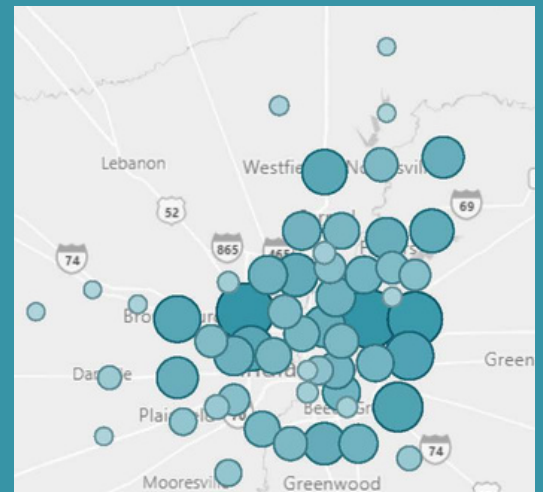
To provide a more targeted approach to families, CCA included *Build, Learn, Grow* information in every child care referral email for those who qualified. As the program ended, we were pleased with this summer's announcement that some *Build, Learn, Grow* families would be eligible for CCDF vouchers, which was especially helpful in creating access to financial assistance for ALICE families, who often fall just outside of the eligibility requirements. Because families already had a child care program selected, this expedited the process for many families, and it was well-supported by our partners at Firefly.

Build, Learn, Grow supports for child care programs were crucial to keeping many programs open after the challenges of the pandemic lingered. CCA supported programs with applications, and many expressed appreciation for the simplified process, fast turnaround, and flexibility to use grant dollars in ways that met their individual program's needs.

CCA also connected with community partners that served families to make them aware of the opportunity with the intent of sharing it with and supporting their own clients. With the support of Early Learning Indiana, we also specifically targeted businesses to educate on the importance of the program and how they could use it to support their employees.


\$27,345,011
 Amount Awarded

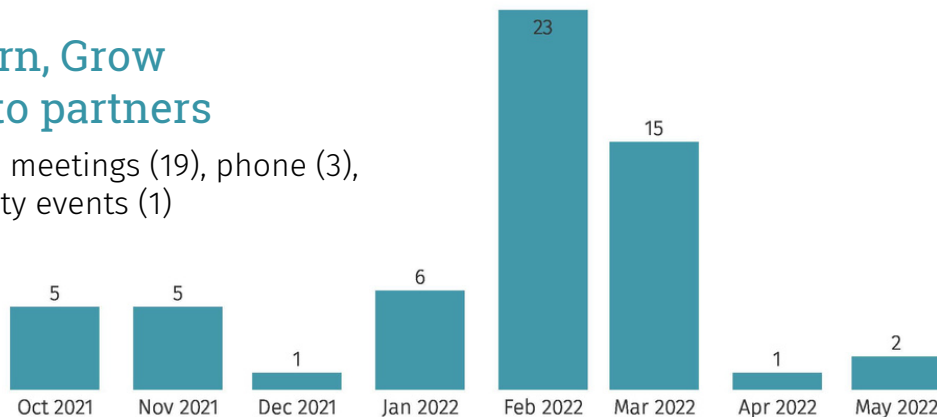

6,736
 Children Served



Children Served by Zip Code

Build, Learn, Grow outreach to partners

via email (34), meetings (19), phone (3), and community events (1)



Non-Traditional Care

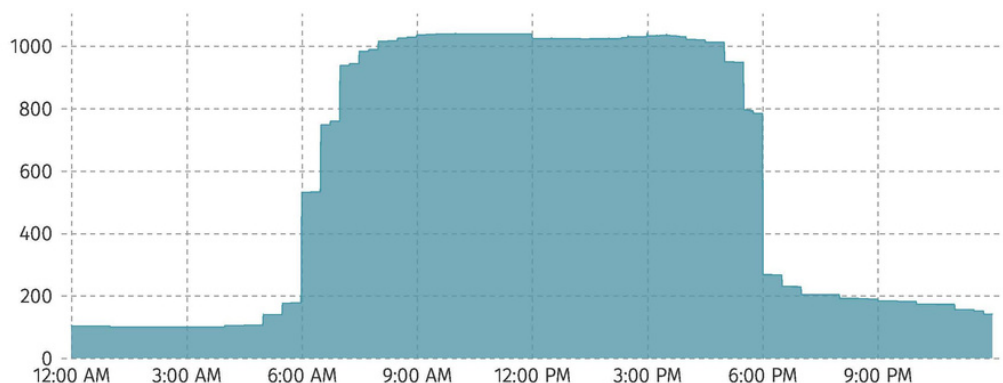
In this time of economic recession, central Indiana families are working multiple jobs or taking on overtime to fill income gaps caused by inflation. We see this trend with low-income workers and single parents but also middle-class, two-parent households as well.

While demand clearly exists, 29% fewer programs offered extended hours this year, 35% fewer offered overnight hours, and 23% fewer had weekend care. Even programs that offer care from just 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays struggled to recruit and retain staff. It was even harder for non-traditional programs to find staff willing to work second and third shifts, especially in family child care homes with fewer staff and tighter margins. Planning for children at non-traditional times of the day also makes it difficult to ensure child-to-teacher ratios are appropriate and CCDF limits are in compliance.

Large numbers of central Indiana families need non-traditional care, but they often are not concentrated in one geographic area. For this reason, many programs previously offering non-traditional care did not see the need from families and therefore closed their non-traditional shifts or days. As of September 2022, there were no non-traditional openings in Hamilton or Hendricks counties, requiring these families to travel to Marion County for immediate care. This is especially difficult for families experiencing homelessness or those who do not have transportation. For this reason, CCA staff continue to leverage learning communities and partner resources to connect like-minded programs and to explore creative transportation solutions.

When families can find non-traditional care, most programs, especially those offering infant and toddler care, are not high-quality (Paths to QUALITY™ level three or four). Families in these situations are desperate to find the care that they need. In one recent referral, a mother was willing to take her child anywhere within the I-465 loop and would determine where to live based on the program's location.

Programs Operating by Time of Day



305

Programs with Extended Hours

Any operating hours outside of the traditional range of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., including overnight hours.

106

Programs with Overnight Hours

Operating hours that begin in the evening (or earlier) and continue through the night into the morning (or later), including night-only and 24-hour programs

109

Programs Operating on Weekends

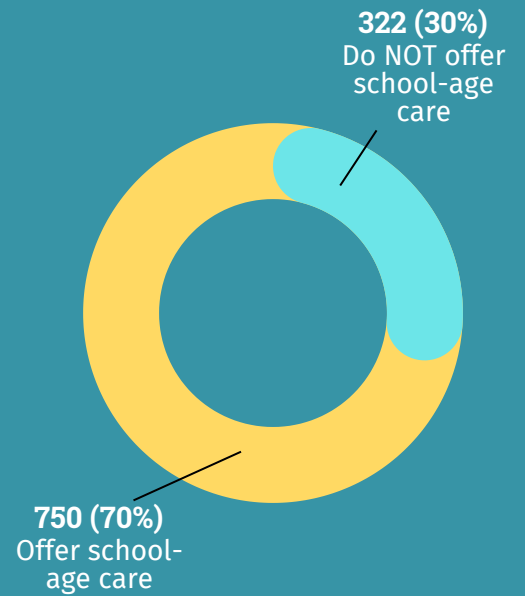
School-Age Care

In central Indiana, the number of programs offering school-age care increased by 1.5% and school-age capacity increased 5.6%, while the percentage of overall programs offering school-age care stayed roughly the same.

The *Build, Learn, Grow* scholarship greatly aided families struggling to pay for before- and after-school care throughout the 2021-22 school year. While this scholarship ended for most families in the spring, those who needed break care for school-agers received a wonderful opportunity through the extension of the scholarship through the summer.

While Marion and Hendricks County school-age care options increased overall, the number of school-age programs decreased in Hamilton County. Even for those programs who are licensed to provide school-age care, many are no longer offering it to families. School-age care is a particular challenge for providers because many do not have the technology to support them. Staffing is also especially challenging for school-age programs. Staff must usually work split shifts or part-time to cover both before and after care and are often paid less than full-time early childhood educators. Because of this, many youth workers are college students who only work seasonally or leave after a year to pursue other career options. Transportation is also a challenge because many programs could no longer spare staff to drive buses to and from the local schools or meet children at the bus stop. Even for those who have adequate staffing, maintenance and inspection of vehicles can pose a challenge.

Hamilton County's decrease in school-age programs proved especially problematic because many school districts shifted start and end times. Demand for school-age care increased because elementary kids were getting out of school before the older kids, who many families were using as babysitters. Many school districts in Hamilton County also have policies that do not allow children to ride the district's school bus to a place other than their home address. This is especially challenging for programs that do not offer transportation. Because of many of these factors, most programs offering school-age care did not have openings when CCA connected with them this fall - which amounted to only four in Hamilton County.



School-aged children served by Build, Learn, Grow

981

Served through school-year scholarships

1,123

Served through summer scholarships





DEMAND



Child Care
Resource and
Referral Network

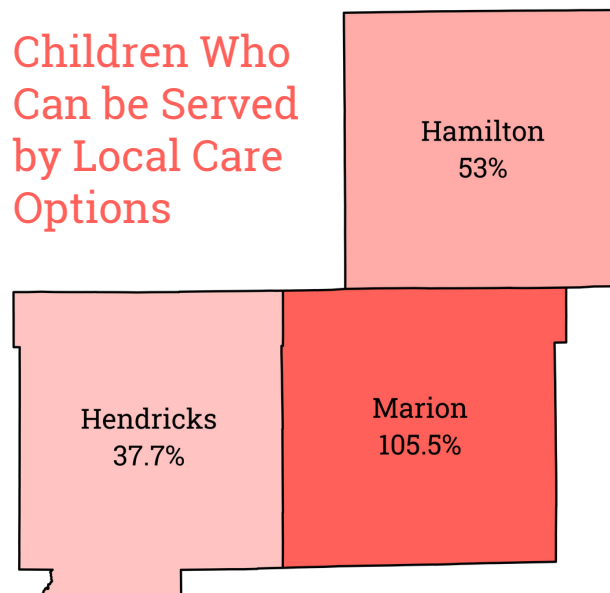


Capacity Sufficiency

Capacity Sufficiency Rate went up slightly this year, which means that children who need care are more likely to be able to be served by a child care program near their residence. Although we are making good progress in Marion County, families across central Indiana continue to struggle to find care, especially in Hamilton and Hendricks counties. Oftentimes, programs' listed capacity in statewide databases may not match the spots actually available. Many times, there are classrooms available but not enough teachers to staff the room.

There also may be available capacity for certain age groups that doesn't match the demand of another age. For example, in September 2022, Hamilton County had only two programs with infant openings, versus 20 programs with preschool openings. This makes things especially difficult for families with multiple children, who may need to send their children to different programs or pull an older child from a program to take them to where there is an infant opening for a younger child.

Children Who Can be Served by Local Care Options



Family Referrals

CCA served 2.5 times more families in 2021-22 than last year. Much of this comes from awareness and hand-offs from community partners, especially from Firefly's CCDF families. Use of search engine optimization and Google AdWords also allowed CCA to reach a much wider range of families; 73% of CCA's family requests came in through the website. The pandemic also continues to play a role as parents are returning to work, especially after the COVID-19 "baby boom."

Unfortunately, much of the increased demand also came from the lack of openings in child care programs. In the past, many families could wait until the last minute to secure a place for their child. As more and more families came up against barriers to finding an opening, they began coming to CCA in hopes that we had additional ways of securing care that they didn't already know. Late summer / early fall referral requests generally increase due to a new school year, but much of our recent increase can likely be attributed to this challenge with lack of openings. As of September 2022, infant openings were only available in 16% of Hamilton County programs, 28% of Marion County programs, and 31% of Hendricks County programs. The figures are even worse if you consider only high-quality programs.

Oftentimes, families return to CCA for a second referral when none of the programs CCA provided have openings. 75% of families we surveyed who said they are still searching for care indicated it was because providers did not have availability.



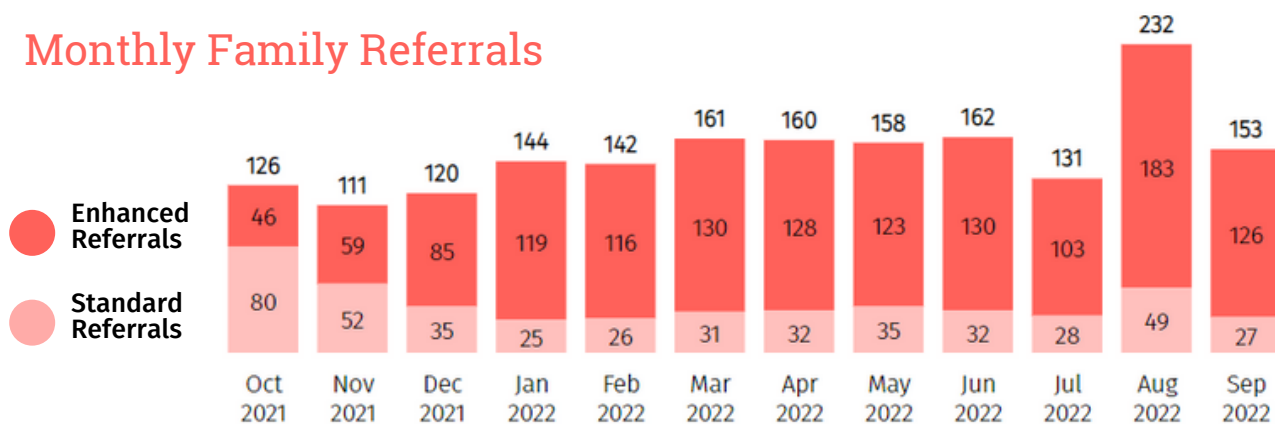
1,512

Families Served through Referrals

In these instances, we ensure that families feel supported and heard even if we can't always provide a solution. We validate that they aren't doing anything wrong when they couldn't find care either.

For this reason, families continue to rate CCA well in surveys. CCA's referral net promoter score of 16 shows that more families are "promoters" of our services than not. 68% agreed or strongly agreed that referrals met their expressed needs, despite lack of available openings. Families know that we go above and beyond for them, completing multiple searches if needed. In one instance, we completed four separate referrals for a mother who was not finding care that met her needs. On the last referral we did for her, we expanded the search to all programs within the I-465 loop, checking vacancies at more than 500 programs.

Monthly Family Referrals



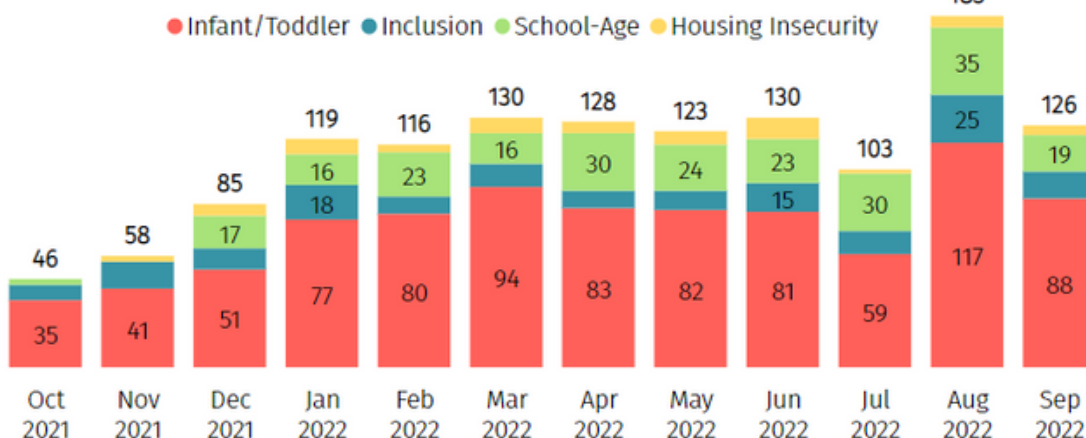
Thank you very much for the information and the support that CCA has offered us. CCA helped me find child care within my reach and accessibility. What struck me most was the quick attention, quality of assistance, and the information they have provided to me twice. My family is very grateful for the quality of the staff that has attended to us and the information provided has benefitted us a lot.

Harisson Palacios Montenegro
Spanish-speaking parent

Enhanced Family Referrals

CCA conducts enhanced referrals when a family comes to us with a need to find care for an infant, toddler, school-ager, child with special needs, or child experiencing homelessness. In these cases, CCA checks for vacancies in programs that will meet the families' needs, either through calling a program directly on behalf of a family or searching our database for programs that were recently called. As openings have been increasingly hard to find, staff have been creative about giving families options and providing education on how to explore these options. We encourage families to plan ahead as much as possible, especially by getting on a waitlist at a quality program. As of September 2022, 37 programs in our area had waitlists for infants, which does not even include those programs that were simply not accepting infants at all. Many programs do not offer infant care due to the expense of staff and equipment, so we also encourage families to join waitlists for toddler / two-year-old care as well.

Enhanced referrals by primary need



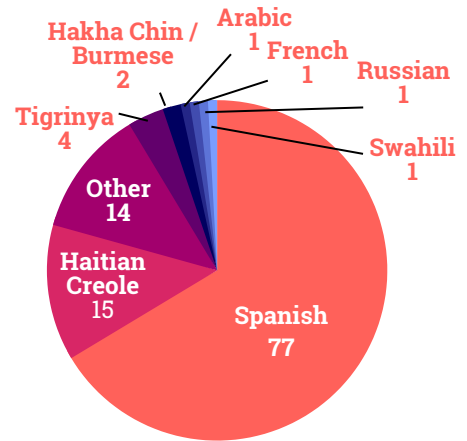
Immigrant families and those with limited English skills often struggle with understanding the child care system or how to navigate it. For this reason, CCA conducts vacancy checks for these families, regardless of whether they would qualify for an enhanced referral. This ensures a smooth communication process and allows CCA to advocate for culturally-sensitive needs.

The majority speak Spanish, and CCA bilingual staff supported them in person, over the phone, via email, or through text. For those speaking other languages, CCA worked with community partners and used online apps to translate referral emails into 11 languages. These emails link to a wide number of resources on the CCA website, which is translated into 26 different languages. Numbers continue to grow as we create relationships with new immigrant communities within central Indiana.

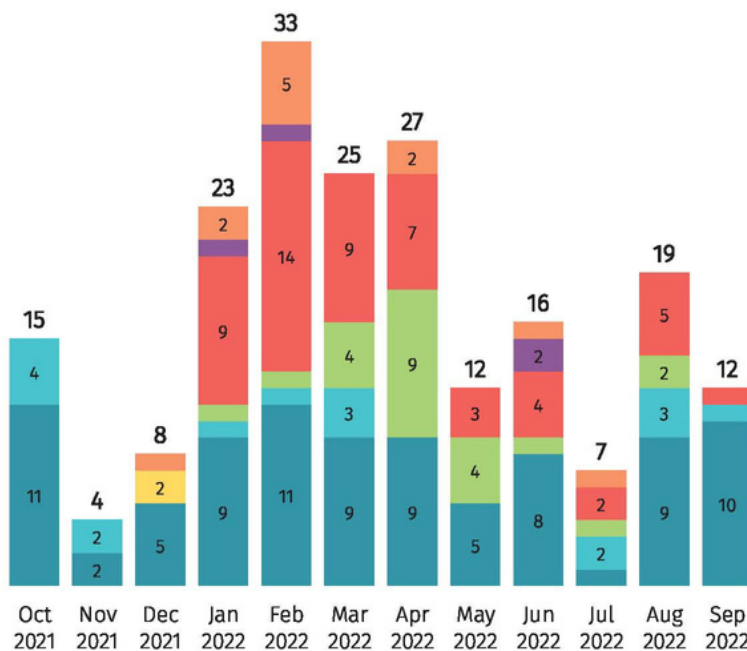
In the winter, we forged many fruitful connections, allowing us to support even more of families. We saw a large increase in the Haitian community, mostly due to word-of-mouth recommendations. We continue to nurture relationships with the Chin/Burmese communities; yet, referrals for this community are often low because they are so well supported by other Burmese organizations and many Burmese child care programs are thriving.

Through a relationship with Brighter Futures Indiana and LUNA Language Services, CCA staff can provide targeted support over the phone, which is especially useful for languages with which we do not have experience. Some families whose first language is not English don't have an email address, so staff also use translation apps to communicate via text when possible.

Referrals for Families Speaking Languages Other than English



Enhanced Referrals for Families Whose First Language Is Not English



CCA also offers access to wrap-around support, going the extra mile to connect families to community organizations for resources related to health, employment, translation, food, and more.



Family Resource Navigator

Children thrive when they are healthy, happy, and supported - whether by ensuring access to high-quality early care and learning programs, healthy breakfast options, or a library card to stock up on bedtime stories. As their first and best teacher, parents are crucial to a child's success. One way CCA focuses on improving child well-being is by focusing on the parent's well-being also. Whether that's through expanding career opportunities, improving health, or ensuring social support in other areas. CCA is proud to serve as navigators for families - expertly assisting in finding high-quality child care while also connecting families with additional opportunities to meet their needs.

For the past few years, CCA has been creating and building a strong network of community relationships. These relationships allow CCA staff to do warm handoffs when we identify areas of need that could provide wrap-around supports for a family.

This summer, CCA formed a partnership through the Child Care Resource and Referral Network with the findhelp website and database, which complemented the work we were already doing to help families with two-generation supports. Findhelp provides a repository of resources that staff can use in the moment to find resources for a family based on their zip code, availability, and needs.

As we move into 2023, CCA will be using findhelp as an opportunity to form and expand new partnerships. We plan to identify types of organizations with the greatest opportunity, such as community centers and hospital networks, to understand their work better. Through targeted outreach to organizations, we will encourage them to update their findhelp profile, using this connection as a conduit to create new partnerships or reengage with those whose relationships have stalled.



Family Resource Navigator Referrals

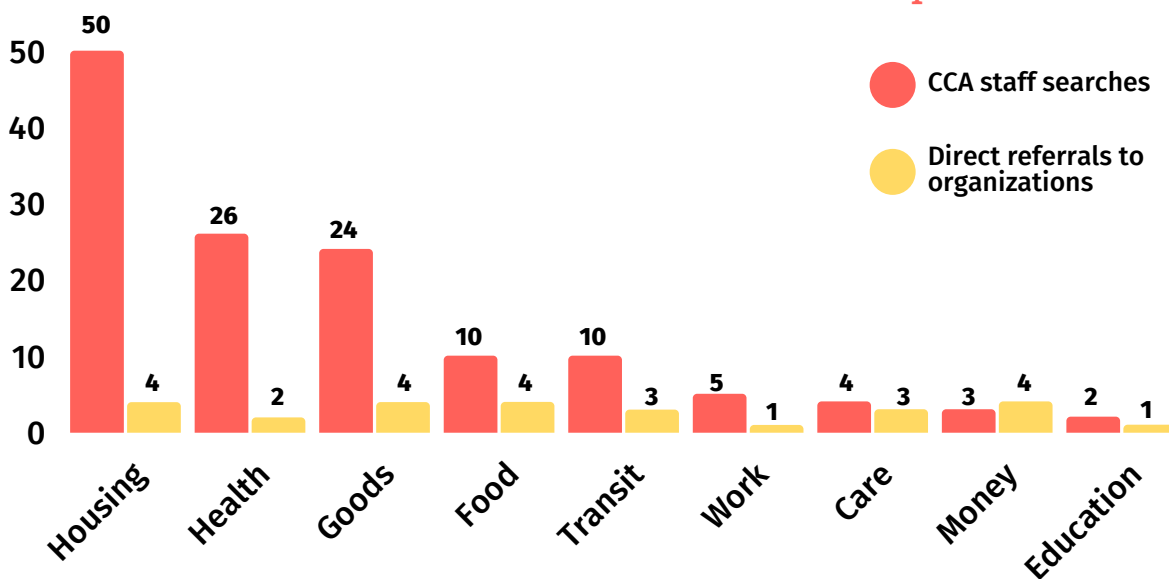
In the few months CCA has been using findhelp resources, about 27% of families we talk to on the phone choose to take advantage of the additional navigator supports. The numbers below reflect these referrals, focused mostly on financial supports, care and education, and food.

The families who we serve through phone-based findhelp needs assessments are only a small portion of those in need. Many who are not interested in the findhelp assessment already have information about resources but just need to find time to reach out to each organization. As families talk with us on the phone, they are often limited as to how much time they can spend with us, whether they are on a lunch break or making the most of a child's nap time. Others simply prefer to connect with us in ways other than a phone call, including our online form and email. When CCA connects with these families, we find they are most likely to request access to resources related to housing, medical insurance, transportation, food, and other basic needs such as clothing, furniture, and infant care items. We look forward to exploring opportunities to direct families to complete findhelp assessments on their own time online, when it's most convenient for their schedules.

CCA Success Story

A single father recently called CCA with questions about his CCDF vouchers. Through the process of listening to his needs, we learned that his son did not have appropriate clothing for school and he was also struggling to pay for gas and utilities. Through findhelp, CCA connected the father to a clothing pantry, Commuter Connect, and many other resources to help him settle into his new home.

Areas of need identified in Findhelp



Workshops for Parents

PUBLIC WORKSHOP NAME	REGISTRANTS	ATTENDEES	VIDEO VIEWS
Seizure First Aid	49	22	NA
Stewards of Children	30	20	NA
Infant Loss and Bereavement	26	17	23
Embracing Self-Care	44	16	36
Introduction to Ableism	20	14	NA
Tips for Picky Eaters	38	11	57
Growing Allyship, Advocates, and Disrupters	24	11	23
52 other public workshops	556	187	1,532
28 private workshops	325	325	NA
TOTAL	1,112	623	1,671

The slow return to normal of the pandemic shifted the way families chose to engage with CCA's workshops. Attendance at private workshops remained strong, likely due to consistent scheduling, previous relationships, and partner marketing support. However, many families registered for our public workshops but did not attend live. To address this, CCA pivoted strategies in order to meet family need.

We experimented with varying dates and times, but interest in live Zoom workshops continued to wane throughout the year. This could be due to "Zoom fatigue" or busier schedules as parents returned to work and children returned to in-person school. Many of our "repeat customers" (27% of registrants) chose to register for multiple workshops at once as we released our quarterly schedules. Many likely did this because they knew that CCA would email them a recorded version that they could watch at their convenience. In order to capture this "just-in-time" need for families to get our information, we began to incorporate workshop recordings beyond our YouTube page, embedding into social media posts on Facebook and Instagram. We also found huge success with using short-form video, which staff embedded into our longer-form workshops, enabling them to "show" rather than "tell" about a topic.

Those attending CCA workshops consistently rate them as exceptional, thanks to simple, high-quality visuals and first-hand expertise, often from community partners. We choose topics thoughtfully, directly based on the needs we hear from families.

Parent Workshops

87

Total Workshops

404

Total Number of Families

106

Families Attending More than One Workshop

9.2

Average Workshop Rating (out of 10)



Things have been going well. William was evaluated by First Steps at the end of December, and he did qualify for speech therapy, and he just had his third visit yesterday. Thank you so much for suggesting that we have him evaluated!!

Parent of a toddler with special needs



Individualized Support and Events

CCA deepens its relationships with families through one-on-one support, delivering resources and expert advice based on the family's need. These supports often center on topics such as child behaviors, special needs and special education, toileting, and infant/toddler development. Thanks to our bilingual supports, we are also a trusted resource for those whose first language is not English, especially as we refer to translation and immigrant resources.

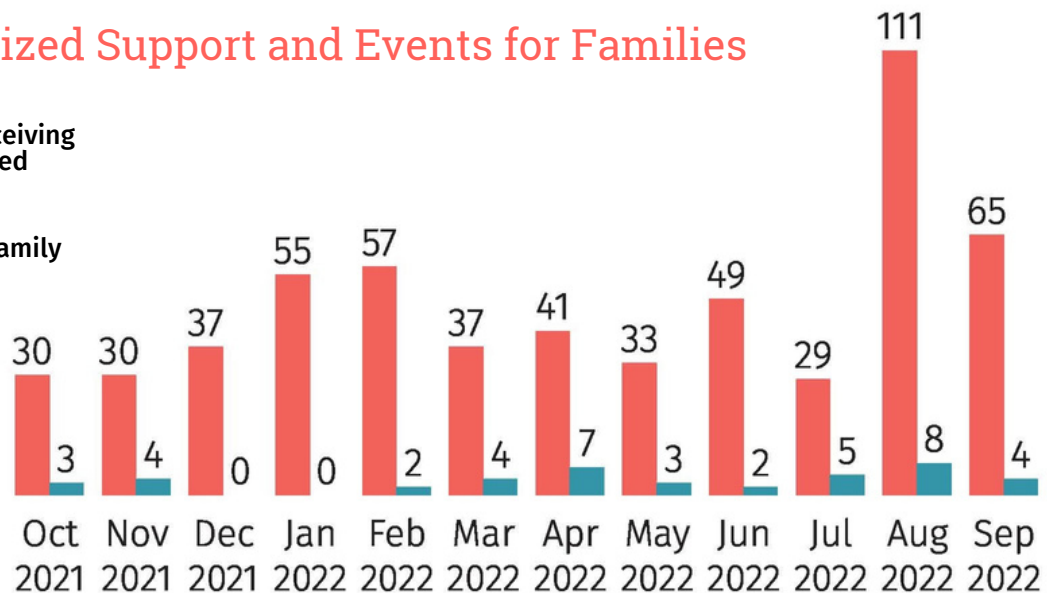
Families often come to us for help finding child care, and this request evolves into a deeper one-on-one relationship. We also rely on reciprocal relationships with community partners to whom we can refer families when their needs go beyond our expertise. These organizations then send families to us when they need child development or early education support. Examples of these partner organizations are Damien Center, SNAP, O'Connor House, Covering Kids & Families, and Indiana Department of Corrections.

Public fairs and events are another opportunity for us to not only promote our services but also connect one-on-one with families. As the pandemic waned, we were able to attend many more in-person events. Even when we were unable to attend, we found success with providing print materials about our services that partners could distribute to families.

We found great success with events where families were a captive audience and may have been waiting in line, such as Gleaners' mobile food banks. International festivals and farmers markets are often a good way to reach both families and potential community partners. In April, our *Be My Neighbor Day* event at the Indianapolis Public Library allowed us not only to collaborate with partners such as WFYI but also actively engage children in activities while we connected with parents.

Individualized Support and Events for Families

- Families receiving individualized support
- Events for family audiences



COMMUNITY IMPACT



Child Care
Resource and
Referral Network



Community Engagement



In a recent survey, community organizations in central Indiana indicated that they were extremely likely to recommend CCA to a friend or colleague. **100%** of respondents who used these services also rated CCA as good or excellent in:

Family child care referrals: CCA has a large number of relationships with other community organizations that serve families. When their clients need child care, organizations see CCA as a partner they trust to support families in finding child care. Eskanazi Health, Hamilton County Youth Assistance Program, Riley Bridge Clinic, School on Wheels, and DaySpring are just a few examples.

One-on-one family support: Similar to child care referrals, partner organizations serving families also rely on CCA as a place where they can send families to get additional support for their children, whether with potty training, breastfeeding, special needs, or many other topics. Organizations also may rely on CCA's bilingual staff to provide individualized support to immigrant families.

Event participation and presentations: The *Summit on Early Learning* welcomed Hendricks County leaders and experts to bring awareness to the importance of child care. As a partner in the *Be My Neighbor Day* event, CCA nurtured strong partnerships with WFYI and the Indianapolis Public Library while building new relationships with others like the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Thanks to CCA's inspiration, IPS began a multi-school Latino family event with Ambassadors of Hope and the John Boner Center.

Meeting engagement: CCA participates in over 70 coalitions and community groups, serving as the voice of early childhood education for central Indiana. We strive to clearly communicate our services in many cross-functional meetings while also educating ourselves about opportunities to which we can refer families in need. Most notably, we met with Senators Braun and Young to share about our work and the need for care in central Indiana. We also collaborated with Healthier Hamilton County to co-create early childhood mental health resources available to all in Hamilton County.

Collaborative workshops: Among our most popular, 24 of CCA's public workshops leveraged community partners as facilitators or co-facilitators, including the Epilepsy Foundation, the Indiana Center for the Prevention of Youth Abuse & Suicide, In*Source, and the Milk Bank. CCA also presented 27 private workshops directly to partner organizations.

23

Level 1

Organizations with whom CCA actively collaborated and supported

20

Level 2

Organizations for whom CCA conducted a meeting or presentation

38

Level 3

Organizations with whom CCA exchanged resources

CCA Success Story

In April, executive director Mollie Smith participated in a national panel with PBS highlighting the work of partnerships between local PBS stations and CCR&Rs. We presented with long-time partner from WFYI, Gail Strong, to share best practices with other organizations across the country.

Business Engagement

By engaging with local employers, CCA supports working parents by educating employers on the importance of child care to their workforce and how it affects a business's bottom line.

To broadly connect with employers, CCA offered a three-part virtual series called *Educating Business Leaders on Being Supportive in the Workplace with Child Care Concerns and Issues*. 40 people attended these sessions live, and YouTube views totaled nearly 100 in 2021-22.

CCA also educates employers and their workforce through a number of in-person events, including job fairs, onsite employee resource fairs, and networking events such as the State of the Workforce luncheon. Local chambers are also a great opportunity for us to connect; we were privileged to be interviewed as part of Brownsburg Chamber's online web series. EmployIndy has been an excellent partner to connect us to other employers, and we were honored to serve as a model of an employee-friendly organization through their Good Wages initiative.

As CCA's relationship deepens with employers, we work together to identify ways to offer more child care options in that business's area or explore onsite child care. As we worked with Cumberland Trace assisted living facilities, we helped administer and analyze an employee survey to inform their decision on whether to offer onsite child care.

Our goal is to continue to build relationships to get the word out that our services are truly at no cost to the employer. In working with local employer Wood-Mizer, we found they had been planning to pay another company for the same services we offer. We look forward to identifying creative ways to advertise and more meaningfully connect.



Business Engagement

32

Level 1

Actively supported employers in exploring, planning, or offering child care supports

21

Level 2

Conducted an onsite meeting or presentation related to early childhood education and CCR&R services

125

Level 3

Developed a virtual connection or resource exchange



Social Media

In this new digital age, social media is a huge part of CCA's outreach to our various audiences. We post daily to communicate just-in-time updates, advertise our services, promote workshops, and share information from partners.

This year, CCA took a different turn with its social media strategy that has generated success in the form of more followers, engagements, and views. As new generations are aging into parenting, it has become common that brains are being rewired towards short-form content, especially videos on platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. To address this shift in how our audiences consume content, we created a TikTok profile geared toward families looking for quick parenting tips. Although CCA used TikTok for only five months in the last contract year, it comprised more than 34% of CCA's social media engagement and 65% of video views, despite making up less than 10% of CCA's social media audience.

While TikTok video performance stands on its own as being integral to CCA's media strategy, the videos themselves have also allowed CCA to expand beyond TikTok. Offering a simple way to create content, staff with limited marketing experience were able to make videos easily that also offered a huge impact. These videos were easily repurposed as additions to YouTube via Shorts and Instagram via Reels, which are now outperforming CCA's previous content on those channels.

As the short-form videos create exposure for CCA, it also highlights our expertise and availability of free services. Thanks to a number of videos, CCA was able to connect with families to provide child care referrals or one-on-one supports. The videos also allow staff to show families how to do something, such as calming an infant, rather than telling them, which can often get lost in translation.

Short-form video has proven to be valuable for child care professionals as well, who often don't have more than a few minutes of time to consume information. In April, CCA launched its monthly highlight series, which allows program staff to get news on the latest professional development, grants, and support opportunities in three minutes or less. In May, CCA staff also thanked child care providers via video to commemorate Provider Appreciation Day. In July, we highlighted the importance of provider updates and vacancy checks for families.



5,044
Audience
Up 22.4%



1,424
Posts Published
Up 35.2%



13,418
Engagements
Up 43.2%



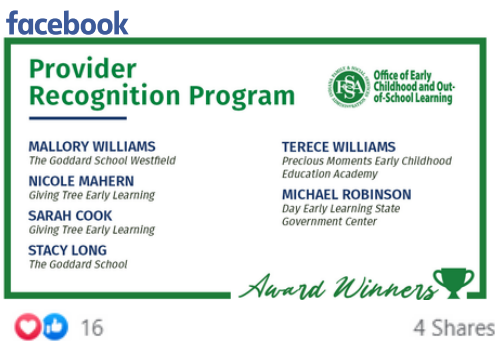
169,124
Video Views
Up 1,283.5%

Social Media Platforms

Each of CCA's social media profiles has a slightly different demographic, so types and frequency of posts vary on each platform.

We launched our newest platform on **TikTok** this summer, and it has already well-surpassed engagement from all of our other social platforms combined. Our most popular post about infant toy recommendations garnered over 78,000 views and spurred requests from viewers to create similar content for children of other ages.

While use of **YouTube** is not new to CCA - we have been posting longer-form videos since 2020 - consumption of YouTube Shorts has exploded in recent months. Similarly, our use of **Instagram** continues with static images but has gained a wider audience as we began to introduce shorter Instagram Reels.



Facebook continues to be our most popular way to reach child care programs. Some of this has carried over from our previous contract work, but more likely has to do with the fact that Facebook's demographic skews older, which matches the program administrator persona.



LinkedIn is CCA's primary method for reaching employers and those who may be interested in switching careers to start a child care business. Social features of staff across all platforms tend to be popular, demonstrating the importance of relationships with our audiences.

Twitter is most popular with community partners, who often retweet our posts. CCA leverages hashtags and tagging to ensure we target those who are most interested in our content and therefore more likely to share about our services.

CONCLUSION

As Child Care Answers enters 2023, we look forward to building upon the successes we have achieved this year and acting upon the lessons we have learned. We will continue:

Meeting families where they are, a core component of CCA's philosophy. Despite families' challenges to find high-quality child care, we continue to create and direct families to educational content that helps them in their parenting journey or in choosing care. Through our website, email, text, and social media, we offer information that families can access 24/7 in ways that are convenient for their busy lifestyles. Through both content and services, we connect with families in their own language and direct them to resources to fulfill their needs beyond child care. As the pandemic has waned, we look forward to building more relationships in-person with those who prefer face-to-face support.

Celebrating and supporting child care programs. Three years into CCA's focus on emerging providers, we have been privileged to help many programs build their child care businesses from start to finish through CCA's services. We look forward to building on recent successes, in Hendricks County especially, to meet the need for choice and quality in that community. Our work will continue as we identify resources and provide direct support to remove roadblocks for those wanting to become licensed or who are exploring a career shift to early care and education.

Fostering and creating new community relationships, whether through large scale events such as *Be My Neighbor Day* or through strategic collaborations like our early childhood mental health web resources with Healthier Hamilton County. By getting the word out to employers and social service agencies about the importance of child care, we can expand our family supports to those who central Indiana organizations are also serving.



