

NE INDIANA REGIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD COALITION

The latest news, announcements, and funding opportunities for Employers and Businesses in NE Indiana

In This Issue

Survey Results: Impact of the Childcare Crisis on NE Indiana Employees

Resources for Finding and Funding Childcare for your Employees

Case Studies: Local employers finding solutions

Join us on June 14 to learn how the Coalition can help you

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Coalition Overview

We are a growing community of parents, nonprofit agencies, employers, healthcare providers, early childhood professionals, educators, and community members organizing to ensure all children in NE Indiana are ensured a strong start.

Our work is to **CONNECT**, **ORGANIZE**, and **AMPLIFY** the voices in our communities. In 11 counties across NE Indiana, we are working on solutions to address affordability, accessibility, and quality. As a region, we are working together to address system barriers and advocate for change.

We invite you to join us on June 14th to learn more about how we can partner with you to find solutions to your own childcare challenges. Details on page 5!

Employee Survey Results

In November 2022, the Northeast Indiana Regional Early Childhood Coalition conducted a survey of parents employed across the 11-county region. The survey was designed to help us better understand the realities that confront many families as they seek high-quality childcare arrangements that match the distinct and diverse demands of their work schedules. There was a strong response to the survey, and we are grateful for the broad participation from across the region. It has provided us with insights that are helping to guide the conversation about serving employer organizations across Northeast Indiana. We have summarized the key takeaways and are pleased to make them available for your review.

Do these results reflect the experience of your employees?

**Join us for a Focus Group to share your experience and thoughts on this Bulletin!
See page 5 for details**

Key Takeaways:

Number of Respondents = 1,427 employees from across NE Indiana

- 87% of respondents indicated that childcare issues affect their productivity extremely often, impacting the ability to do their jobs
- 82% indicated that within the last 6 months, they have been distracted at the workplace due to childcare issues
- 33 % changed the shift they work in order to address childcare issues
- 20% had to take on additional work to be able to afford childcare
- 18% were forced to leave their employment due to the cost or lack of childcare
- 20% had to decline a new opportunity
- 12% had to decline a promotion

EMPLOYER RESOURCES

We know your employees want the best for their children and families, and that as their employer, you want to support their efforts. As a coalition, we want families less worried about child care and we want employers able to find the employees they need. These resources are a great place to start.

FIND CHILDCARE

Early Learning Marketplace is modernizing how families find child care. Through the easy-to-use interface, families can search for programs near them, filter based on their needs, and claim available seats in real time. No more wasting time searching the internet and making phone calls only to reach a dead end.

[Read More](#)

FIND DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT

Zero to Three is focused on making sure every child has a strong start in life. They provide development support and resources for children 0-3 years old, including the Healthy Steps Program.

[Read More](#)



FIND HELP IN YOUR COUNTY

Our coalition is working to help each county in NE Indiana have their own dedicated county coordinator to support local efforts related to childcare. Please see the directory at the end of this bulletin to identify your coordinator.

FIND LEARNING RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

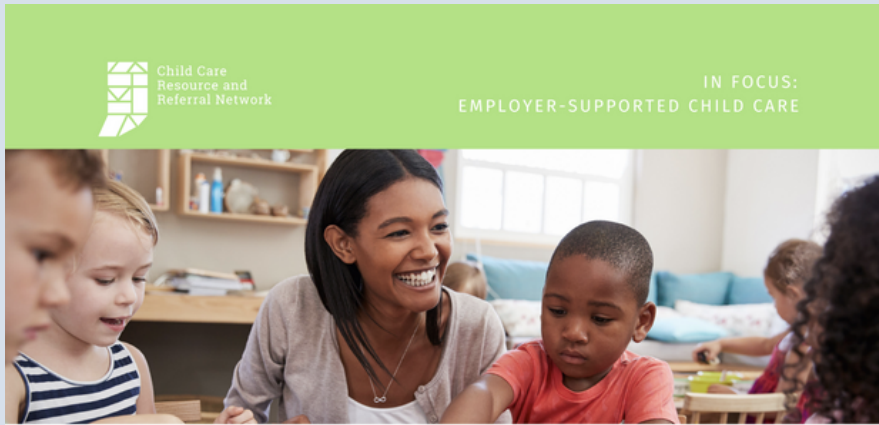
Start Early provides resources from experts that give parents the tools they need to help their children thrive in those critical early years.

Parenting tips and activities are available in an easy to search format for a wide variety of topics.

[Read More](#)

EXAMPLES FROM EMPLOYERS ACROSS THE REGION

Learning from the examples of other employers may spark ideas for your own organization. Click on the studies below:



IN FOCUS:
EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED CHILD CARE



Child Care
Resource and
Referral Network

Thanks to CCR&R for sharing these case studies!

Creating Successful Business-Child Care Partnerships



Polywood engages early education providers to meet employees' child care needs

Polywood is a popular manufacturer of outdoor patio furniture with a long history in the community. The company is not just known for its goods, it's known for its commitment to childhood education for its employees.

"The cost of child care is just ridiculous for the general consumer. It's difficult if you annualize it," said Ryan Zimmerman, Polywood's senior director of Small Town, America, and didn't have a lot of child care or preschool options.

So Polywood leaders set out to change that by partnering with Wawasee Early Learning and paying a percentage of their employees' child care costs. Polywood worked with the established early childhood education provider to open a classroom in Syracuse and paid for the seats upfront to keep the program stable. Today, as employees enroll their kids, the company still foots about 30 percent of the bill.

The classroom serves ages 3-5, and all students are children of Polywood employees. For younger children, the company also secured spots with an infant and toddler care provider and similarly subsidized the child care there.



Coalition Professionals can help you find the right solutions for your organization and can connect you with the local and state resources that can help

When Providing Dollars Makes Sense



A small, family-owned manufacturing company's tuition assistance program yields an undeniable return on investment.

Family-owned and operated for more than 60 years, Indiana Stamp & Indiana Signworks' culture is rooted in the idea of family, according to President Olivia Warner. The manufacturer and distributor of stamps, inks and stamp accessories located in Fort Wayne employs a small staff of roughly 60 people, which means any attrition can have a significant impact of productivity.



In 2002, Warner's father and two business partners realized four employees were getting ready to become parents. In an effort to ensure those employees returned to work, the owners looked at different ways they could help with child care. The addition of an on-site child care center to the new company headquarters, under construction at the time, was considered, but leaders determined that the high cost meant that it was not feasible. Instead, they instituted an infant care tuition assistance program that remains in effect today. Indiana Stamp & Indiana Signworks offers to pay for 33% of child care costs for employees' babies up to 12 months. The only condition is that the parents choose a center that is rated as a Level 3 or higher in Paths to QUALITY, the state's voluntary quality rating and improvement system for child care.

EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUP JOIN US ON JUNE 14TH!

- Are you struggling with open positions due to childcare issues?
- Do you want to learn more about how the Coalition can help you?



We invite all interested employers to join us for a virtual session:

- Understand the current state and outlook for childcare in NE Indiana
- Share the challenges facing NE Indiana Employers who are struggling to find and keep employees due to childcare issues
- Share your input on this bulletin and what information you need to support your workforce
- Meet your Coalition Representatives

June 14, 2023: 12-1pm
[Virtual Session Link](#)

As of January 2023, there were over 14,977 unfilled jobs in NE Indiana and at the same time, there were just under 9,000* willing to work parents. (Source: *Thomas P. Miller and Associates Economic Impact Report Nov. 2022)

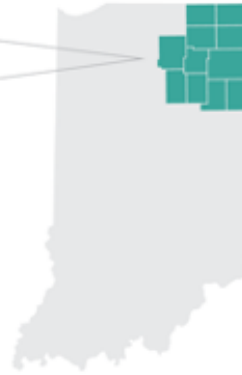


Not being able to access affordable, quality childcare keeps parents out of the workforce, impacting families ability to thrive, while also leaving positions unfilled and creating impact on absenteeism and overall productivity.

Please join us to share your perspective and learn how we can help!

[Register Here](#)

REGIONAL COALITION DIRECTORY AND CONTACTS



We are working across the 11-county region to ensure each county has an Early Learning and Childcare professional focused exclusively on supporting the unique needs of your community. We expect every county to have a Coordinator in place by early-2024. Until that time, the Regional Coordinator will be the point of contact.

Please see the listing below for your county:

| <h2>COUNTY LISTING</h2> | <h3>Adams</h3> <p>Colton Bickel cbickel@adamscountyedc.com</p> | <h3>Allen</h3> <p>Ruthie Hall rhall@uwacin.org</p> | <h3>DeKalb</h3> <p>Kathleen Alter kalter@cfdekalb.org</p> |
|--|--|--|---|
| <h3>Huntington</h3> <p>Matt Ditzler matt@huntingtonccf.org</p> | <h3>LaGrange</h3> <p>Jenna Anderson jenna@noblethriveby5.org</p> | <h3>Kosciusko</h3> <p>Sherry Searles ssearles@kchamber.com</p> | <h3>Noble</h3> <p>Jenna Anderson jenna@noblethriveby5.org</p> |
| <h3>Steuben</h3> <p>Jami Hubbard jhubbard@msdsc.us</p> | <h3>Wabash</h3> <p>Julie Garber Julie@cfwabash.org</p> | <h3>Wells</h3> <p>Colton Bickel cbickel@adamscountyedc.com</p> | <h3>Whitley</h3> <p>Rachel Alexander launchpad@uwwk.org</p> |

THANK YOU!