

Jay County Vision 20/20

Early Childhood Education

Community Listening Sessions

May 2017

The Portland Foundation

Indiana Communities Institute, Ball State University

Indiana Youth Institute



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Executive Summary

In 2010 more than 200 Jay County residents came together and offered their ideas and vision for a strategic plan: The Jay County 20/20 Vision. Intended to be a 10 year roadmap to move the county forward, an implantation plan was created that included four categories with 15 goals or Key Performance Areas (KPA's). Over time the community has worked diligently to achieve the goals laid out in that plan. New initiatives have evolved that reflect the dynamic needs of the community. Significant updates have been made to the plan as the work has continued without pause. Education was one of the original themes of the 20/20 Vision. As the community has pressed forward, early childhood education (ECE) is specific area has proven to have ripple effects across all sectors for the future of Jay County. As such, 20/20 Vision has made it their focus.

Studies have shown that gaps in early childhood opportunity lead to lifelong deficits in skill development, educational achievement and economic success. A solid early foundation develops social and emotional skills, executive function and resilience. These lead to skill development, content knowledge and mastery that lead to higher academic achievement and more economic success over a lifetime.

Jay County 20/20 Vision has actively sought data, information, resources, and partners to push forward to create stronger opportunities for children aged zero to five in an effort to achieve lifelong successes. According to the Indiana Youth Institute (IYI), there are currently 1,775 children aged zero to five in Jay County. 27% or 480 of these children live in poverty. Statistics indicate that 62 of 100 children are in need of care. There are only nine licensed childcare slots available for every 100 children that need them. There are 16 licensed childcare facilities in Jay County, but only half of these have selected to participate in that State of Indiana's Paths to Quality program that certifies their services as high quality. Currently only three are certified as high-quality childcare facilities.

With this background, Jay County 20/20 Vision, the Portland Foundation and Ball State University's Indiana Communities Institute (ICI) brought together parents, caregivers, educators, child service providers, elected officials, and other community volunteers and leaders to gather their ideas and knowledge in a series of listening sessions held throughout the county. They offered many short term goals and several visions of success within the next few years. The groups identified barriers to success and some of the resources to move forward.

During these listening sessions several themes developed and a path forward emerged that envisioned an ongoing coordinated effort for all involved in early childhood education. The first step would be to establish a regular forum to coordinate efforts. By sharing data, a more targeted approach could be made to reach the maximum number of children. The forum would compile a comprehensive list of programs, services, and resources and coordinate the dissemination of that information between service providers and caregivers of children aged zero through kindergarten. This coordinated and targeted effort sustained could maximize the efforts already being made to create the strongest push to deliver high-quality early childhood education to Jay County children.

Notes from Jay County Open Listening Sessions

In April 2017, at the request of the Portland Foundation, Ball State University's Indiana Communities Institute conducted listening sessions in Bryant, Portland, and Dunkirk. These included a data presentation by the Indiana Youth Institute that outlined the state of early childhood education. Attendees included from families with pre-school and younger children, the president of the Jay County Commissioners, the Superintendent of the Jay County School Corporation, Head Start, Jay County Economic Development, and many educators and youth orientated service providers. These groups were asked to offer their ideas about what Jay County can do to improve the experience and outcomes of children aged zero to five years old. These ideas were encouraged to be free-flowing and the notes that follow reflect their alphabetized comments.

These notes document the comments and suggestions based on the personal experiences and observations contributed by the individuals that participated in the listening sessions. They are deliberately not attributed to any person or organization so that all ideas might be considered equally as the community charts a common forward course.

Long Term Goals

1. Annual 'State of the Child' report
2. Better attendance in schools
3. Continued collaboration of groups interested in or serving children
4. Early Head Start program is in place
5. Fewer Individualized Education Programs (IEP) needed
6. Forum for collaboration – long term organization
7. Jay County Preschool – full day expansion
8. Less grade retention as a result of work in early childhood
9. Literacy education for parents
10. Parent's mindset has changed to value early childhood education
11. Programming for parents that connects to resources and connects them to educational programs and services for their children

Shorter Term Goals

1. Awareness campaign – importance of ECE, data, information about available services
2. Bona Vista – monthly visits to Jay County from Kokomo office

3. Broaden outreach to families and service providers
4. Building upon the assets that already exist – funding, organizations, buildings, people
5. Collective agreement endorsed by organizations i.e. *‘Every child should have...’, ‘Every child should be free from...’*
6. Community campaign – awareness, education, attraction to cause
7. Community resource guide for family/caregivers – printed handout, online
8. Community resource guide for service providers – printed handout, online
9. Creation of a ‘one-stop-shop’ – physical location, person,
10. Dashboard of metrics i.e. youth data, number in need, number served, educational outcomes
11. Develop a community mindset that early childhood education is important and can be addressed
12. Early Head Start opportunity is coming -be ready to support Head Start in applying for it
13. Education campaign for the community
14. Encourage existing providers to become “high quality” on Paths to Quality state designation
15. Expand the effort - bring more organizations to work together to improve ECE
16. Explore funding opportunities to accomplish these goals
17. Family engagement – find out what they experience and what they need, connect them to resources
18. Forum for collaboration – regular meetings, designated time and place
19. Funding for ‘spots’ in Pre-K – more resources to expand existing providers
20. Head Start is at Level 3
21. Identify someone to coordinate ECE efforts
22. Identify those in need – pool information to create master list of children to serve
23. Identify vacant or soon to be vacant buildings that could be used for ECE
24. Inventory of empty buildings that could be used for ECE
25. Jay county resource directory for ECE and related services
26. Keep up the momentum – continue to meet and work together beyond Vision 20/20

27. Learning center is tailored for ECE
28. Mentoring programs – for caregivers with children aged 0-5 and for children
29. Planned activities for children of parents attending engagement meetings
30. Quantify the problem – pool data from schools and other service providers to create target list and dashboard
31. Reach more children with services
32. Serve more children with more resources and collaboration
33. Simplified curriculum for parents – parenting skills, other
34. Sustain the early childhood education effort started by Vision 20/20
35. Unified front – all interested organizations and providers working toward common goals
36. Voucher person – monthly visits to Jay County
37. Youth Service Bureau – bring to the cause

Gaps in Services, Resources, and Barriers to Goals

1. 24 hour care is needed – especially for 2nd and 3rd shift workers
2. 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. care is needed
3. Access to the 'systems'
4. Age 0-3 education - Lack of
5. Bad parental behavior not being 'called out' when it is seen
6. Bridging of the gap between socio-economic classes
7. Broken families
8. Communication – organization to organization, organization to families – lack of
9. community knowledge –importance and needs of ECE - lack of
10. Coordinated effort – between organizations –lack of
11. Day care centers needed of sufficient size and in convenient locations
12. Drug addiction in families

13. Early Head Start is needed
14. Educated professionals for pre-K - not enough of them
15. Education level of parents hold them back
16. Employer provided/sponsored day care -lack of
17. Engagement with families and caregivers, between organizations– lack of
18. Facilities that could host ECE efforts- shortage of
19. Family income - low
20. family time -lack of
21. Fun! - missing
22. Funding for programs and services- not enough
23. Hopelessness
24. Infant care - lack of
25. Information is not available or shared
26. large facility that meets regulations -lack of
27. large licensed day care -lack of
28. Low paid workers in pre-K is a barrier to recruitment and retention
29. Mental health awareness is missing
30. Mismatched values
31. Money - not enough
32. One stop shop – lack of
33. One stop website – lack of
34. Parent motivation is not what it might be
35. Parental skills are not where they could be
36. Pediatric doctors & dentists are needed
37. Perception of high costs hold parents back

38. Pride / embarrassment holds parents back from seeking services
39. Quality pre-K services are few
40. Sense of community is lacking
41. Small community communication needs improvement
42. Soft skills are needed
43. Space – not enough slots in programs/classes
44. Sparse & spread out population
45. Specialized pediatric services are far away
46. State support is not what it could be from the Indiana General Assembly
47. Stigmas exist toward those needing help
48. Support groups - lack of for addiction and affected family
49. Threatened federal resources – funding cuts
50. Transient populations –hard to track children in need and for parents to connect to resources
51. Transportation is needed to get to services and programs
52. Understanding of the available programs and services lacks
53. Understanding/empathy poverty - lack of
54. Vision and speech services are needed
55. Volunteer motivation is needed
56. Vouchers – lack of access, knowledge, awareness
57. Vouchers - lack of availability

Assets Identified to Achieve Goals

1. 1,000 books before kindergarten library programs
2. 211 Service
3. Arts and Parks
4. Arts Place
5. Billboards

6. Bona Vista in Kokomo
7. Born to Learn (The Portland Foundation)
8. Born to Learn Camps (United Way)
9. Camps
10. Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) - State of Indiana - FSSA
11. Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR)
12. Children's Bureau, Inc. - Muncie
13. Christian Academy
14. Civic organizations
15. Civic Theater
16. Communication with each other – referrals to other programs
17. Community Center – Portland
18. Courts program/s
19. Department of Child Services (DCS) – State branch office in Portland
20. Division of Family Resources (DFR) – State branch office in Portland
21. Dolly Parton library program
22. Early Learning Indiana
23. Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) funds
24. Elected officials
25. Fatherhood engagement curriculum exists
26. First Steps - Indiana program
27. Grant programs – community and family services – federal block grant
28. Head Start
29. Head Start outreaches to most needy families
30. Head Start provides financial support for staff education / professional development

31. Health fairs
32. Healthy Families (state funded)
33. Homeschooling
34. Indiana Youth Institute
35. Inter-Urban Transportation / Life Stream
36. Jay County Health Department
37. Jay County Hospital
38. Jay County Promise
39. Jay County School Corporation
40. Jay County School Corporation Pre-K program
41. John Jay Center – provides space for training
42. John Jay Center for Learning – other potential
43. Kids Hope
44. Kindergarten prep school (KiPS) Jay County Library
45. Library - information source, distribution point
46. Library - meeting space
47. Lions Club
48. Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Zion Churches
49. Music Works
50. Optimist Clubs
51. Parks Department
52. Pennville Day Care – Level 4 Paths to Quality
53. Pennville Library reading programs – 1,000 books before kindergarten
54. People – volunteers
55. Philanthropic community

56. Portland Foundation
57. Portland Rotary
58. Praises and Pathways
59. Pregnancy Care Center
60. Private home day cares
61. Purdue Extension
62. Reach Out and Read Indiana
63. ReadUp – United Way
64. Recycling Center
65. Service organizations
66. State money
67. Summer food programs
68. Teachers
69. Tri Kappa
70. Tutoring program at library
71. Tutors at library
72. United Way
73. Vacant school buildings
74. Women Infants and Children (WIC)
75. Youth Service Bureau (YSB)
76. Zion Early Learning Center

Additional Information Needed That May Help to Achieve Goals

1. Do we need more vouchers?
2. Information about and from foster care – 0-5 age range is wanted
3. Is funding guaranteed?

4. Mental health and substance abuse – resources?
5. Service providers – what do they know about programs, resources, etc...
6. The reason 'why'...
7. The State of Indiana's plan for early childhood...
8. What do kindergarten teachers know and see...?
9. What is available in areas of the county
10. What is the mindset of the parents and caregivers
11. What legal barriers exist that might inhibit collaboration
12. What others (organizations, regions, counties, states, etc) are doing
13. What parents want and need
14. Where the need in the county exists
15. Who are the people who care about early childhood education
16. Who is going to coordinate our efforts

These notes are the ideas, comments, suggestions based on the personal experiences and observations contributed by the individuals that participated in the listening sessions. They are deliberately not attributed to any person or organization so that all ideas might be considered equally as the community charts its own course forward.

Themes Emerged from Listening Sessions

- 1) Jay County has several established institutions that are committed to early childhood education. These include, but are not limited to Jay School Corporation, Portland Foundation, Jay County Government, and Head Start. These and other organizations have made significant investments and impacts and are driving forward to increase the number and quality of educational opportunities.
- 2) There are a number of programs operating in Jay County that are providing care and services to children aged zero to five. There are also some operating out of Kokomo, Muncie, and Indianapolis that serve Jay but are needed closer to home. In the short term it may be possible to entice representatives from these to make more frequent and regular visits to Jay County so that those that need them may access them locally.

- 3) It may be worth exploring the possibilities of a one-stop-shop space that could house regional and state representatives when visiting or that could be permanently staffed. Additionally, if a large enough facility were available, it might be shared by multiple organizations building cost savings and convenience for beneficiaries.
- 4) There is some desire for a forum where local, county, regional, state, and federal resources for Jay County early childhood education can come together to share information and create strategies to achieve common goals. It is challenging for organizations to maintain current awareness of what the other organizations are offering or the resources available to them and those that they serve. This could start as simply as a monthly lunch meeting.
- 5) There is a need to communicate with families and caregivers about the importance of early childhood education and the resources available to them. Creation of a comprehensive resource directory for parents and caregivers could be a connecting thread for the service provider forum. It could take the form of a website, but also a one-page handout for families and caregivers.
- 6) To quantify the opportunity and progress, it appears that there is a need to create a dashboard that measures and tracks the progress of the community in serving this need. Of the nearly 500 children with the most need, it is believed that many are being served by multiple organizations, others perhaps by only one, and others have simply not been engaged. If information were to be shared among organizations using all appropriate efforts to maintain privacy and confidentiality, it is believed that a comprehensive list could be made so that a unified effort could be made to reach every child in need of care.
- 7) An overarching theme that emerged through the listening sessions was that a dedicated and coordinated effort is needed to maximize the potential for early childhood education in Jay County. Regular and ongoing meeting forums, combined information resources, a one-stop-shop location, and updated resource pamphlets for families all require project and organization management. Creating a full time early childhood education coordinator position could take on these responsibilities. It could be a contract position or housed within an existing organization. Funding could be pooled and matching grant dollars might be sought. This is an effort that can be achieved through ongoing coordination and a forum for collaboration between care and education providers and those that support the community.

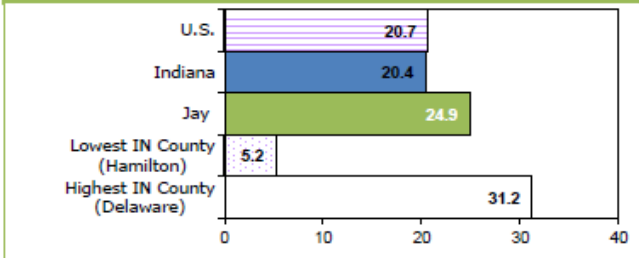
Data Presentation – Indiana Youth Institute

Kids Count in Indiana 2017 Data Book

Jay County



Percentage of Children in Poverty: CY 2015



Child Population Under Age 18: CY 2015

	Total	Females	Males
White	5,373	2,649	2,724
Black	77	34	43
American Indian	7	4	3
Asian	25	8	17
Hispanic, of any race	280	129	151
Total	5,762	2,824	2,938

Economic Well-Being

	2012	2013	2014	2015
% of Children in Poverty, Age 0-17 (CY)	25.8	27.2	35.2	24.9
% of Public School Students Receiving Free Lunches (SY)	42.0	41.5	42.9	42.4
% of Public School Students Receiving Reduced Price Lunches (SY)	11.1	12.5	12.0	11.3
Monthly Average # of Persons Issued Food Stamps (SFY)	2,993	2,964	2,795	2,501
Monthly Average # of Families Receiving TANF (SFY)	44	28	24	22
Annual Average Unemployment Rate (%) (CY)	7.9	7.7	5.8	8.2
Median Household Income (CY)	\$42,410	\$41,847	\$38,663	\$41,021
Per Capita Personal Income (CY)	\$33,895	\$36,029	\$38,169	\$39,662
% of Food Insecure Children	23.0	23.1	22.9	N.A.

Health

	2012	2013	2014	2015
# of Live Births (CY)	296	296	339	306
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 Females, Age 15-17 (CY)	19.5	L.N.E.	9.9	11.4
% of Low Birthweight Babies (CY)	12.8	6.4	8.0	7.8
% of Mothers Who Received First Trimester Prenatal Care (CY)	56.4	61.1	67.0	59.5
% of Mothers Who Reported Smoking During Pregnancy (CY)	21.3	21.3	21.2	18.3
% of Live Births to Unmarried Parents (CY)	38.5	36.8	37.8	36.3
% of Children Under Age 19 Who Are Uninsured (CY)	8.4	9.2	9.0	8.4
# of Infant Deaths, Under Age 1 (CY)	3	6	6	4
# of Deaths, Ages 1-19 (CY)	L.N.E.	L.N.E.	L.N.E.	1

Early Childhood

	2013	2014	2015	2016
# of Children Served by First Steps (SFY)	59	57	65	68
# of Licensed Child Care Centers (SFY)	0	0	0	1
# of Licensed Child Care Homes (SFY)	9	11	13	14
# of Registered Child Care Ministries (SFY)	2	1	1	1
# of Licensed Child Care Slots per 100 Children, Age 0-5 (SFY 2012-2015)	7.7	6.2	7.8	8.8
# of Children Receiving CCDF Child Care Vouchers (FFY)	34	38	31	40
Monthly Avg # of Children on Wait List for CCDF Vouchers (FFY)	15	3	7	4

N.A.: Not available; different data sources have different years of released data; L.N.E.: Low Number Event; Unstable number, less than 20 in the numerator

CY- Calendar Year: Jan 1 to Dec 31 FFY- Federal Fiscal Year: Oct 1 to Sept 30 SFY- State Fiscal Year: July 1 to June 30 SY- School Year: Fall Term to Summer Term

Looking for state level data? Check out the Data Book: www.iyi.org/databook

Benefits of early childhood education

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Opportunity gaps

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- Early opportunity gaps can become long-term deficits
 - Low socio-economic status in childhood lower K-12 achievement, lower high school graduation rates, lower college-going rates
- Education is an incremental process
- Requires strong foundation



If life is a race, some children begin on the starting line, some get a head start, and some begin far behind. Early opportunity gaps lead to short-term differences in skill development, which lead to long-term lags in educational attainment, employment opportunities, and economic self-sufficiency. Education requires a strong foundation to build skills and content knowledge. Foundation includes not just academic preparation, but also development of social-emotional skills, executive function skills, and resilience. These skills can be developed in pre-kindergarten.

Glenn Augustine, Indiana Youth Institute.

- Pre-K students are more kindergarten ready
- “Fade out” = idea that academic benefits of Pre-K disappear with time
- “Catch-up” = alternative explanation
- Students without Pre-K eventually catch up to peers
- Catch-up is costly
- When Pre-K program is high-quality, gains persist

- Increased math achievement through 8th grade
- Increased language, math, & science achievement through 5th grade
- Reduced grade retention
- Less need for special education
- Increased high school graduation rates

- More than academic benefits
- Reduced anxiety, depression, and behavior problems
- Soft skills: social-emotional, executive function, and resilience
- Soft skills critical for school and workplace success
- Pre-K = workforce development

- In Indiana, pre-K investment of \$1 estimated to return benefit of \$3.83 – \$4.00
- Cost savings associated with:
 - Reduced special education use
 - Reduced remediation/grade retention
 - Increased lifetime earnings
 - Reduced crime

Nelson, A.A., Brodnax, N., & Fischer, L. (2016). The Economic Impacts of Investing in Early Childhood Education in Indiana.

Economic Benefits of Early Childhood Education for Individuals and Society	
Individual Economic Benefits	Societal Economic Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher parental income due to parents working • Higher income for child in adulthood • Higher educational attainment • Higher labor force participation in adulthood • Reduced likelihood of teen pregnancy • Lower use of illicit drugs and tobacco products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional tax revenue from parents • Additional tax revenue from child in adulthood • More productive workforce through higher educational attainment • Reduced safety net expenditures • Reduced expenditures on special education, remediation, and retention • Reduced crime

State of early childhood in Jay County

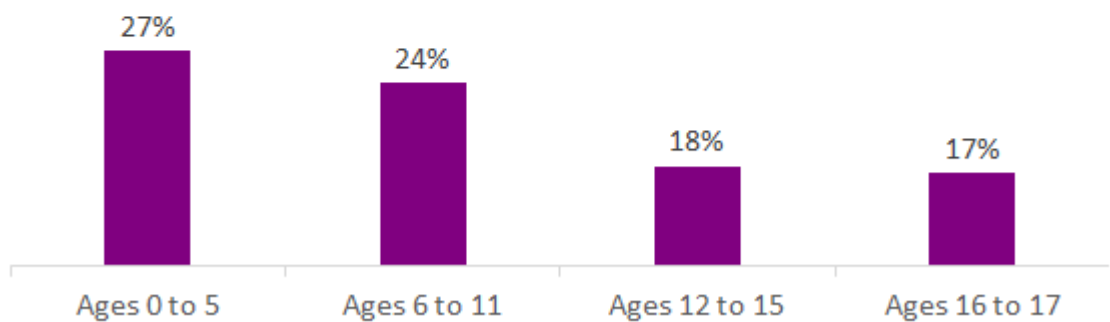
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 **Young children**

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- Jay County houses 1,775 children ages 0-5
- 480 (27%) live in poverty

Percent of children in poverty, Jay County: 2011-2015

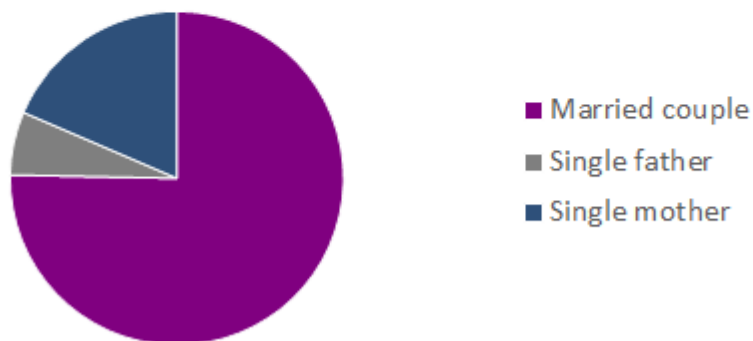


Source: American Community Survey

Federal poverty thresholds:
Family of 2: \$16,240
Family of 3: \$20,420
Family of 4: \$24,600

- 1 in 4 young children live in a single parent home

**Family Type for Children Ages 0 to 5, Jay County:
2011-2015**



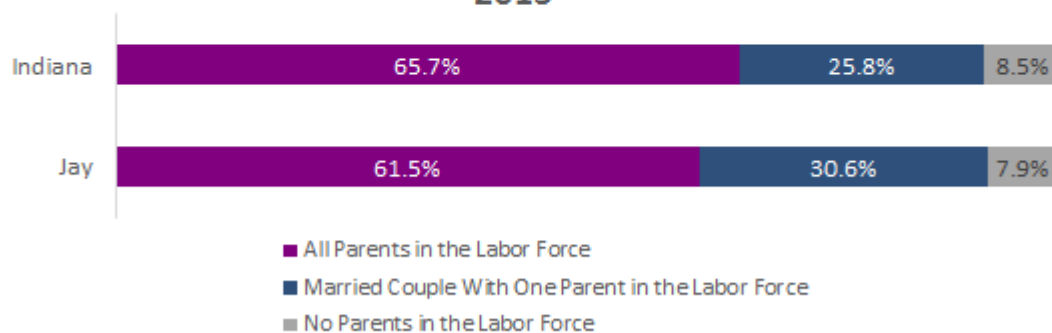
Source: American Community Survey

Jay County's youngest children (aged 0-5) are slightly more likely to live in a married-couple family than older children (aged 6-17)

Children in single-parent homes tend to face greater economic challenges

- Children with all parents working are likely in need of care

**Parental Labor Force Status for Children 0-5: 2010-
2015**



Source: American Community Survey

Types of Child Care in Indiana

- Licensed center: non residential building
- Licensed home: residential building
- Licensed ministry: operated by a church
- Informal care: Family, friend, neighbor care

Licensing standards set the minimum acceptable health, safety, and program standards for operating a childcare program; it is not an indicator of quality.

Paths to QUALITY

Indiana's child care quality rating system

- Level 1: Meets children's health and safety needs
- Level 2: Environment supports children's learning
- Level 3: Planned curriculum for children's development and school readiness
- Level 4: National accreditation

- Level 1: voluntarily chosen to be part of Paths to Quality, meet all basic health and safety standards
- Level 2: consistent daily schedule, planned activities for children, provide program information for families
- Level 3: significant staff professional development, incorporate family and staff input into program
- Level 4: nationally recognized accreditation



- 16 licensed childcare facilities

Number of child care facilities, Jay County: 2016

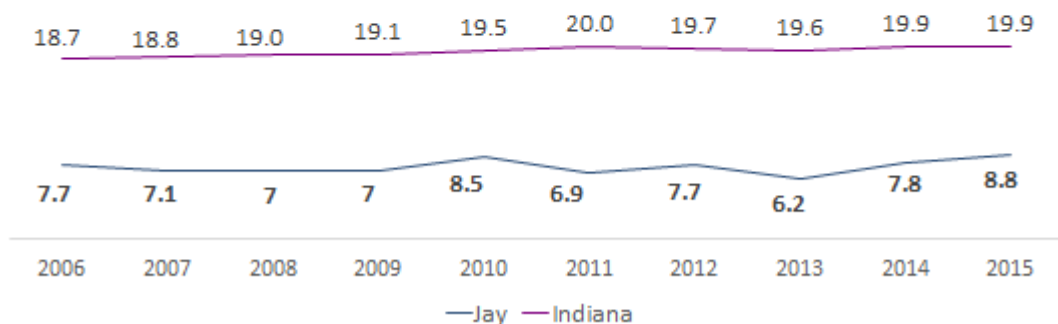


Source: Family and Social Services Administration

There are also registered ministries; unlicensed but registered with the State Dept. of Health and the State Fire Marshal meeting basic health/safety standards. In Jay County, only 8 of the 16 programs are on the Paths to Quality, only three of those are high quality or at level three or four.

- 62 in 100 children are likely in need of care
- Slots in licensed childcare for only 9 in 100

Licensed Child Care Slots per 100 Children, Ages 0-5



Source: Family and Social Service Administration

- High-quality care not affordable for many families
- Average annual cost in Jay County: \$5,928
 - 29% of income for a family in poverty with one child
 - 15% of income for family at 200% federal poverty level
 - 13% of income for family at median family income

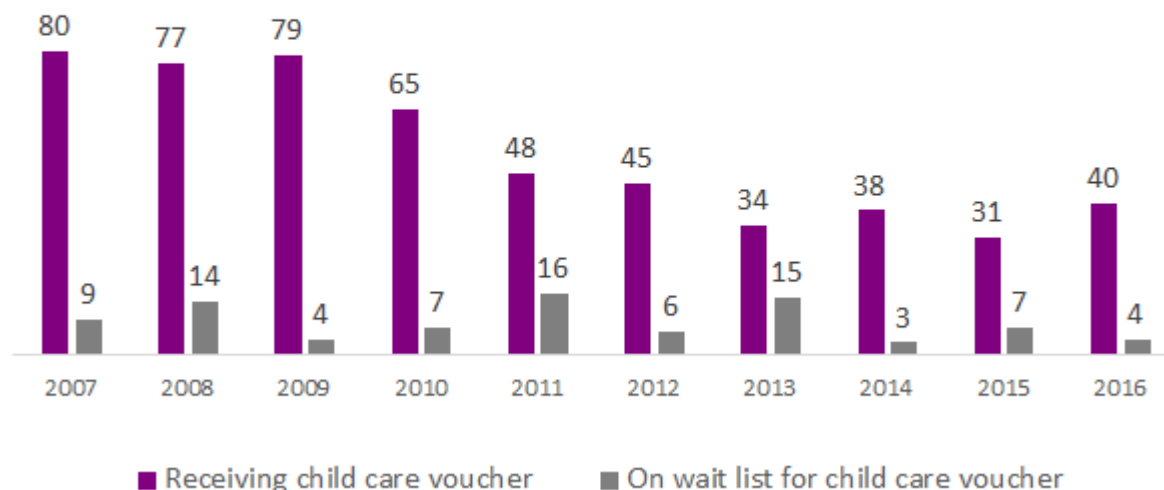
In Indiana, only 17% of children who qualify for fee assistance receive it.

Jay County median income (for those with kids): \$46,009

Federal poverty thresholds: Family of 2: \$16,240, Family of 3: \$20,420, Family of 4: \$24,600

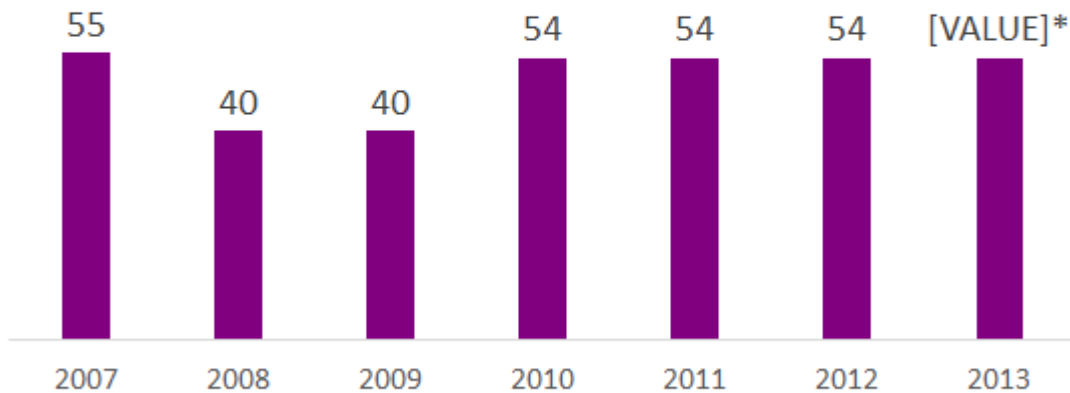
Source: Early Learning Advisory Committee

Child Care Vouchers, Jay County



Source: Family and Social Services Administration

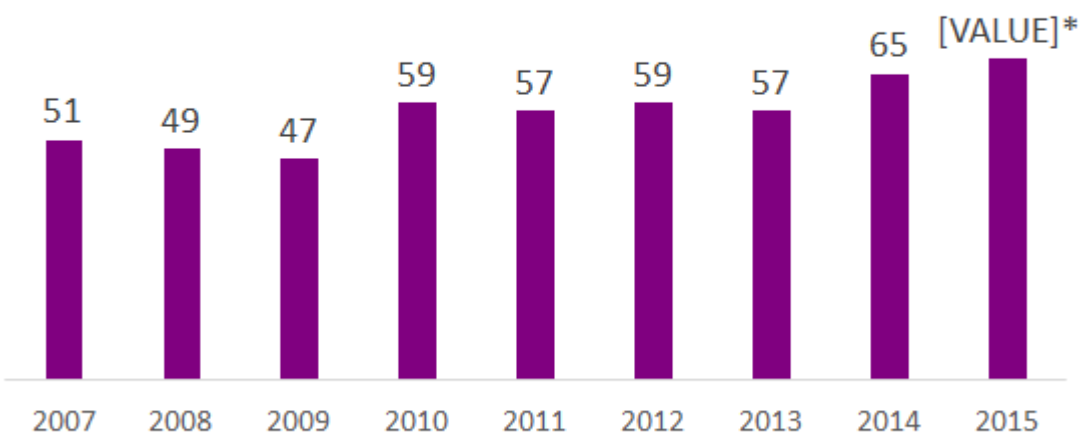
Head Start Funded Enrollment Slots Jay County



*Now at 68 children

Source: Family and Social Services Administration

Children Served by First Steps, Jay County



*2016 FSSA Report

Source: Family and Social Services Administration

- Number of children ages 0 to 3 with disabilities, developmental delays, or significant risk for disabilities or delays served by first steps early intervention

- Serves 250 Children Ages 3-5
- East (2), Haynes, Redkey, Westlawn, Jay County High School
- Assesses Performance Using State and Local Standards
- Affordable

- Children either attend two, three or five days per week
- There are a total of 17 classes offered at 6 locations, with East Elementary having two teachers
- The program has expanded in its 15 years of existence from just serving special needs children to serving all children
- There are still special services offered, especially for children with an Individual Education Plan
- The cost ranges from \$150-\$250 per year, based on the age of the child

Source: Jay County Schools

- Bona Vista Programs/Child Care Solutions
 - Child care resource & referral serving 10 counties, including Jay
 - <http://bvchildcaresolutions.org>
 - (765) 452-8870

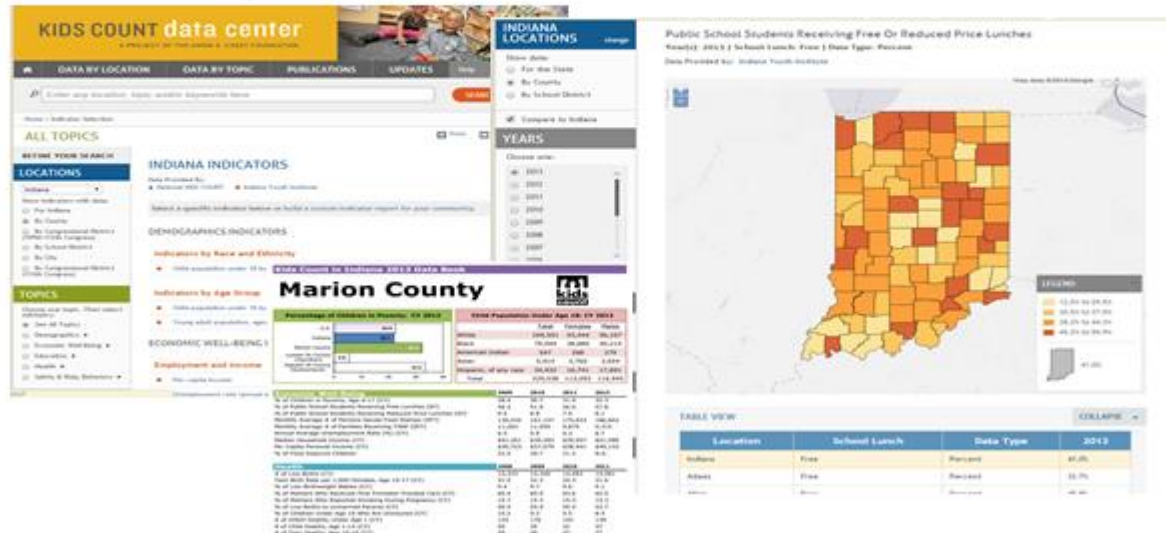
Source: Family and Social Services Administration

- Bona Vista is in Kokomo (downtown, just north of IU Kokomo)
- Families can find information about the different types of child care available, information about the characteristics of a high quality program, and receive referrals to specific child care programs in their area
- child care providers can receive professional development in early care and education, assistance with starting a family child care home, training on state licensing requirements
- Community members can find information about the local supply and demand for child care, i.e., the types of programs available, the types of programs parents are asking for, and the gaps between the two (i.e., lack of non-traditional hours)

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Indiana County Level Data



- KIDS COUNT® in Indiana Data Book
- Issue Briefs
- Custom Data Requests



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