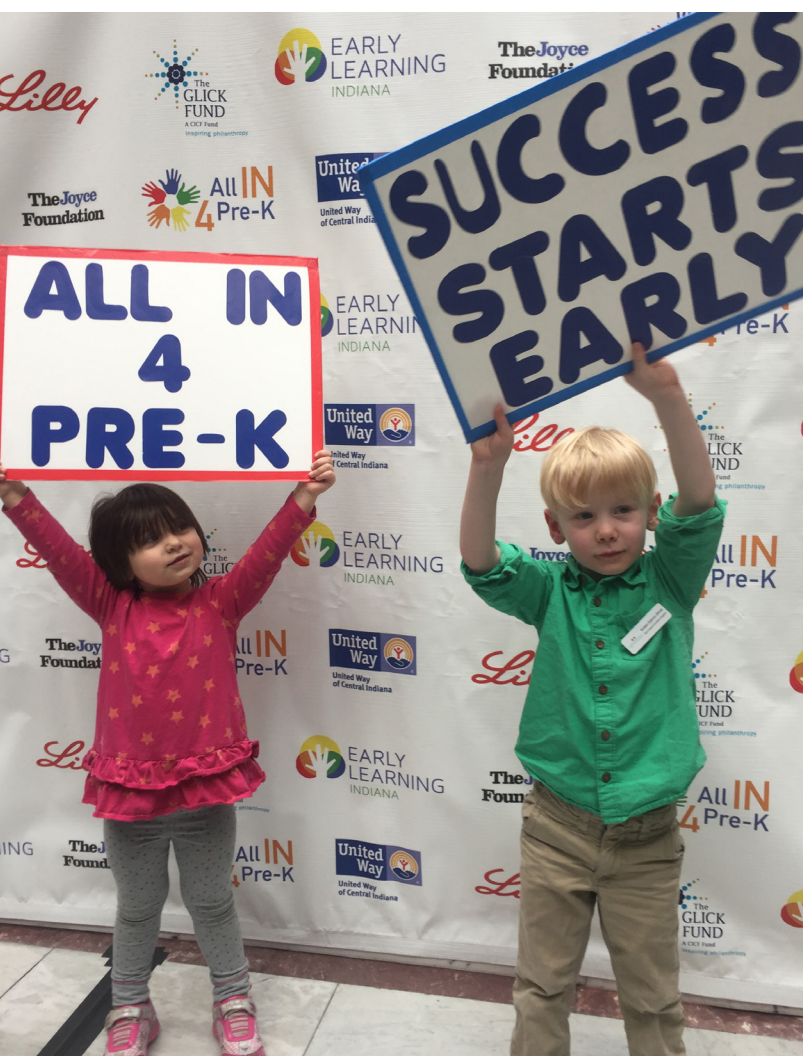


INDIANA EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT



INDIANA EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge with gratitude the overall work of the ELAC Provider Participation and Advancement Workgroup whose members are listed below. The following members contributed significantly to the development of this Toolkit: Mike Bachman, Natalie Brake, Lacey Kottkamp, Victoria Matney, Liane Nickey, and Kathy Oren. Amanda Lopez, Project Management Support for ELAC, with Transform Consulting Group also contributed. The following communities contributed to piloting the toolkit and providing feedback: By5, Born Learning Connection, Clinton County Child Care Coalition, Learning Link Dekalb County, Northwest Indiana Early Learning Coalition, Ready to Grow St. Joe, and The Big Goal Collaborative.

ELAC Provider Participation and Advancement Workgroup

Mike Bachman, Co-Chair, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children; Kathryn Raasch, Co-Chair, Wayne Township Schools; Debbie Beeler, Hoosier Uplands; Carla Biro, Early Childhood Alliance; Natalie Brake, Early Learning Indiana; Maggie Clifton, Indiana Association of United Ways; Tammy Dant, Apple Tree Learning Center; Kacey Deverell, Early Childhood Alliance; Bridget Diedrich, Southeastern Indiana Economic Opportunity Corporation; Bethany Ecklor, FSSA/Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction; John Elcesser, Indiana Non-Public Education Association; Shannon Gage, Early Childhood Alliance; Randall Garratt, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children; Shannon Garrity, Indiana State Department of Health; Lynn Hall, Indiana University; Deb Hughes, Grace Point Church of the Nazarene; Erin Kissling, Indiana Department of Education; Julia Kolouch, Bauer Family Resources; Lacey Kottkamp, Indiana Head Start State Collaboration Office; Olanda Lewis, Family and Social Services Administration; Elizabeth Massey, Geminus Child Care Resource and Referral; Victoria Matney, Child Care Resource Network; Jahanah Murphy-Sims, Early Learning Indiana; Liane Nickey, Huffer Child Care Resource and Referral; Kathy Oren, Community Education Coalition; Sue Panzica, Early Childhood Coalition of St. Joseph County; Bruce Stahly, Horizon Education Alliance; and Dawn Underwood, Johnson County Learning Center.

The Governor-appointed Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee developed this Coalition-Building Toolkit. The FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning provides administrative support for ELAC and funded the design of this resource.



**Office of Early Childhood &
Out-of-School Learning**



**Indiana Early Learning
Advisory Committee**

Find the Indiana Early Learning Coalition-Building Toolkit and other resources online at the ELAC website: www.elacindiana.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-------|
| About the Early Learning Coalition-Building Toolkit | 4 |
| Early Learning Coalition-Building Framework | 5 |
| Early Learning Coalition-Building Focus Areas | 6 |
| Early Learning Coalition-Building Self-Assessment | 7-13 |
| Early Learning Coalition-Building Toolkit Resources | 14-16 |

ABOUT THE INDIANA EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT

Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) is working to ensure that children ages birth to 8 years and their families have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs that keep children healthy, safe, and learning. ELAC continues to be focused on ensuring that critical infrastructure is in place locally and statewide to support increased accessibility, affordability and high-quality.

ELAC's Provider Participation and Advancement (PPA) workgroup identified an opportunity to support the communities across the state who are interested in advancing this work locally. This Early Learning Coalition-Building Toolkit is a culmination of their work that is meant to support all communities at all stages of development, with the goal of improving positive change for children and families.

This Early Learning Coalition-Building Toolkit is intended to support your community in actively engaging the best and the brightest for our youngest learners. It includes three components:

- 1. Early Learning Coalition-Building Framework** describes the importance of an engaged, integrated community in building a stronger early learning system.
- 2. Early Learning Coalition-Building Self-Assessment** is a strengths-based tool that allows Coalition members to reflect upon current practices and identify goals for improvement.
- 3. Early Learning Coalition-Building Resources** provide communities best practices and ideas in each of the focus areas that can propel the Early Learning Coalition as they grow.

As you consider what you already are doing to engage your community, we hope that you will be inspired with a renewed spirit. We hope that spirit will lead to even more effective collaboration with your community. We also hope that you will feel energized as your community comes together to drive positive change for children and families.

THE INDIANA EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING FRAMEWORK

The Early Learning Coalition-Building Framework puts forth a set of common goals focusing on key elements of building infrastructure to support early learning on the local level. The successful implementation of this Framework promotes positive outcomes for children and families.

In Indiana we work together so that every child can develop to his or her fullest potential – socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and academically. Through growth in all of these domains, the child will become a healthy, capable, competent and powerful learner.

In Indiana, an Early Learning Coalition is defined as any group of stakeholders from different sectors of the community who come together to positively impact learning for children birth through age 8. While the group may be focused on the whole child and the many systems that impact the child and family, early learning is at least one area of interest. A Coalition will identify the most critical challenges in a community, and work together to identify and implement solutions in ways that each individual stakeholder cannot do alone.

To that end, Early Learning Coalitions can be initiated, implemented and supported by key elements with clear goals in mind. The Early Learning Coalition-Building Framework articulates five goals that define coalition-building initiatives and describes effective practices within the local community.

KEY ELEMENTS + COALITION GOALS = EFFECTIVE COALITIONS



KEY ELEMENTS

- Diversity
- Operational Structure
- Data Driven Decision-Making
- Goal Setting and Action Planning
- Continuous Improvement
- Sustainability

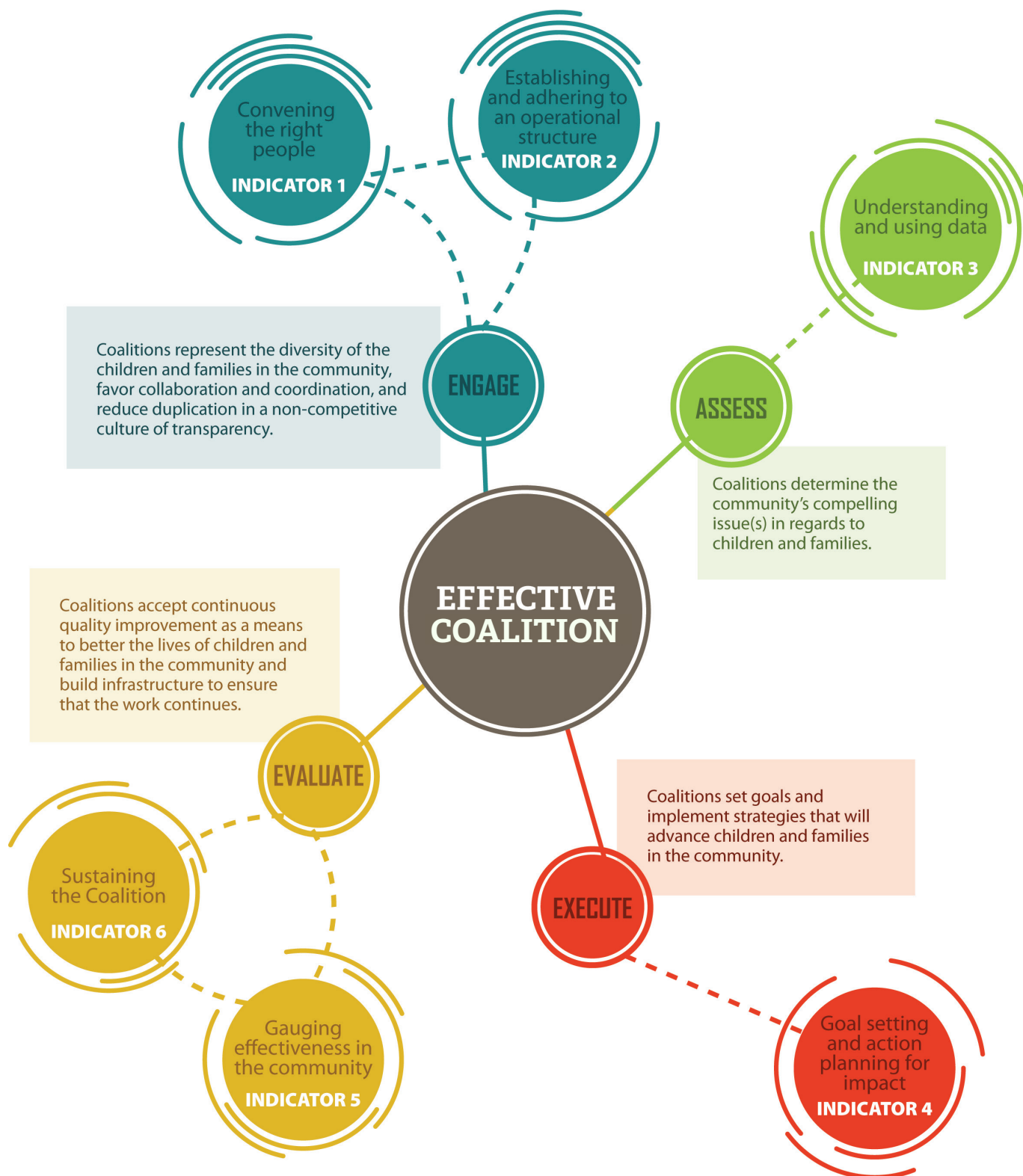


COALITION GOALS

- Promote collaboration and coordination within the community
- Reduce duplication to more effectively use resources
- Promote a compelling issue that is based on fact
- Support comprehensive and systemic change
- Support the on-going advancement of children and families

THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING FOCUS AREAS

The following self-assessment has six indicators that are grouped according to the four Early Learning Coalition-Building Focus Areas: Engage, Assess, Execute, and Evaluate.



THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION-BUILDING SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Early Learning Coalition-Building Self-Assessment is a tool that empowers local community members to reflect upon their current practices and apply them to six indicators across four progressive stages. By reflecting upon their practices, community members will be able to:

- 1. Identify strengths**
- 2. Celebrate achievements**
- 3. Recognize opportunities for improvement**
- 4. Create goals for advancement**

The self-assessment can effectively be completed in many ways with as many voices speaking into the process as the Early Learning Coalition deems appropriate. A Coalition could have each person, small groups, or everyone together assess all or certain indicators then collect and compile to apply to the rubric. Some Coalitions may ask only Coalition leadership to participate. Groups can also choose a specific focus area or indicator to assess to really engage in deep reflection and conversation around a single topic. Others may choose to complete the self-assessment in its entirety. Most important is for the Early Learning Coalition to choose the process that is most comfortable and manageable for the group.

EACH INDICATOR IS BROKEN OUT ACROSS FOUR STAGES OF GROWTH:

Entering: Community members are gathering to converse about early learning and agree to work towards advancing early learning in their community.

Emerging: Community members are researching, analyzing, and creating for future implementation.

Progressing: Community members are implementing agreed upon structures, action plans, and systems.

Excelling: Community members are continually monitoring and evaluating their structures, action plans, and systems for effectiveness, making revisions when and where necessary.

TO COMPLETE THE SELF-ASSESSMENT FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE GUIDELINES:

1. Decide both who will participate and how the Coalition will approach this task.
2. Choose which Focus Area(s) and/or indicator(s) will be assessed.
3. Take time to reflect.
4. Document current practices in the appropriate area.
5. Apply practice to the rubric to decide the appropriate Stage of Growth.
6. Consider if and how improvement can be achieved.
7. Set goals for improvement, including actionable items, and document in the appropriate area.

1 Convening the right people

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | Community members gather to discuss concerns regarding early learning with the intention of impacting change. RESOURCE: BUILD INITIATIVE - Setting and Resetting the Stage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | Community members analyze what people, organizations, and/or sectors are not present. RESOURCE: Stakeholder Engagement Process RESOURCE: Stakeholders Wheel Facilitator's Packet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | Formal invitations are extended to people, organizations, and/or sectors for their specific expertise which includes their role and responsibilities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | A system is in place for the review of membership in regards to those people, organizations and/or sectors that are or are not present in relation to the goals/needs of the community or coalition. |

Goals and plan for growth:

2 Establishing and adhering to an operational structure

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | Community members agree to work together, establish trust, and share ideas openly. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | Community members research, discuss, and agree upon the appropriate operational structure including roles and responsibilities for participation and engagement. RESOURCE: Coalition Work Tools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | Community members implement operational structure. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | A system is in place to monitor and evaluate the chosen operational structure for effectiveness and efficiency, revising if/when necessary. |

Goals and plan for growth:

3 Understanding and using data

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | Community members discuss what data is available and pertinent to the conversation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | Community members analyze data for trends and discriminate between needed and unnecessary data. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | Community members use data to define the compelling issue facing the community which they would like to impact. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | A system is in place to monitor and evaluate the on-going collection and use of data. |

These resources apply to all four stages of growth:

RESOURCE: BUILD INITIATIVE - Assessment and Planning

RESOURCE: Early Learning Data Informed Decision Making Toolkit

RESOURCE: Early Learning Indiana (ELI) Data Center

Goals and plan for growth:

4 Goal setting and action planning for impact

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | <p>Community members discuss possible goals for the coalition.</p> <p>RESOURCE: Smart Beginnings Strategic Planning Template</p> <p>RESOURCE: Coalition Work Tools</p> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | <p>Community members set goals and create an action plan for impact.</p> <p>RESOURCE: Coalition Work Tools</p> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | <p>Community members implement action plan with shared responsibilities and accountability.</p> <p>RESOURCE: BUILD INITIATIVE - Working Together and Taking Action</p> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | <p>A system is in place to monitor and evaluate the steps in the action plan, revising when agreed upon for greatest potential impact.</p> |

Goals and plan for growth:

5 Gauging effectiveness in the community

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | Community members identify ways of evaluating the effectiveness of the coalition in the community. RESOURCE: Intensive Technical Assistance Assessment Tool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | Community members research, discuss and agree upon a continuous quality improvement model. RESOURCE: BUILD INITIATIVE - Measuring Progress and Evaluating Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | Coalition members implement the chosen continuous quality improvement model that assists in the regular monitoring and evaluation of overall impact on community. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | A system is in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the chosen continuous quality improvement model. |

Goals and plan for growth:

6 Sustaining the coalition

☐ Not here yet.

Current Practices:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entering | Community members discuss need and opportunity for funding to assist with coalition infrastructure. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging | Community members create and agree upon a plan to sustain the coalition and impact work. RESOURCE: BUILD INITIATIVE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing | Community members implement the sustainability plan. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling | A system is in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the sustainability plan for effectiveness and revisions are made when necessary and agreed upon. |

Goals and plan for growth:

COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT RESOURCES

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COALITION

A partnership of education, business and community leaders focused on aligning and integrating the Columbus, Indiana and region’s community learning system with economic growth and a high quality of life.

Find out more at www.educationcoalition.com

Direct link to the Stakeholder Engagement Process

http://www.educationcoalition.com/assets/documents/document_1487612906.pdf

INDICATOR 1 Emerging

BUILD INITIATIVE

The BUILD Initiative supports state leaders in the development of comprehensive early childhood systems that prepare young children to thrive and succeed. Find out more at www.buildinitiative.org

Direct link to the Community Systems Development Toolkit

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/Resources/CommunitySystemsDevelopmentToolkit.aspx>

INDICATOR 1 Entering

INDICATOR 3 All levels

INDICATOR 4 Progressing

INDICATOR 5 Emerging

INDICATOR 6 Emerging

READY BY 21®

Ready by 21® is a set of innovative strategies developed by the Forum of Youth Investment that helps communities improve the odds that all children and youth will be ready for college, work and life. Find out more at www.readyby21.org

Direct link to the Stakeholders Wheel Facilitator’s Packet

<http://www.readyby21.org/resources/stakeholders-wheel-facilitators-packet>

INDICATOR 1 Emerging

COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT RESOURCES

COALITIONS WORK

Coalitions Work is a consulting group based in the Hampton Roads region of eastern Virginia that is dedicated to serving public and private clients throughout the world. Coalitions Work offers your organization, partnership or coalition the benefit of more than 25 years of coalition skill building and change strategies. Find out more at www.coalitionswork.com

Direct link to Coalitions Work Tools

<http://coalitionswork.com/resources/tools>

INDICATOR 2 Emerging

INDICATOR 4 Entering, Emerging

INDIANA EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ELAC)

ELAC is working to ensure that children ages birth to 8 years and their families have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs that keep children healthy, safe and learning. Find out more at www.elacindiana.org

Direct link to Data Informed Decision Making Toolkit

<http://www.elacindiana.org/resources>

INDICATOR 3 All levels

EARLY LEARNING INDIANA (ELI) DATA CENTER

Ensuring the highest level of early care and education for children in Indiana is the ELI mission. The ELI Data Center provides the metrics to support and inform that mission, making these data available to anyone and everyone in Indiana. The dashboard provides a concise, high-level view about need and availability of care and early learning for Hoosier children.

Find out more at <http://datacenter.earlylearningin.org/>

Direct link to The ELI Data Center

<http://datacenter.earlylearningin.org/>

INDICATOR 3 All levels

COALITION-BUILDING TOOLKIT RESOURCES

SMART BEGINNINGS

Smart Beginnings is a locally-driven enterprise that creates community commitment to school readiness by bringing public and private leaders together to collaborate on priorities for their youngest citizens.

Find out more at www.vecf.org/what-is-smart-beginnings

Direct link to Smart Beginnings Strategic Planning Template through the BUILD Initiative portal

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/portals/0/uploads/documents/resource-center/community-systems-development/2c%204%20strategic%20planning%20template.pdf>

| |
|-----------------------------|
| INDICATOR 4 Entering |
|-----------------------------|

SMART START

Smart Start brings together all the people involved in a young child's life—families, teachers, doctors, caregivers, social workers, and many others—to ensure every child has all they need for healthy growth and development.

Find out more at www.smartstart.org

Direct link to Intensive Technical Assistance Assessment Tool

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED486370.pdf>

| |
|-----------------------------|
| INDICATOR 5 Entering |
|-----------------------------|