



How Communities in Illinois Use EDI Data

In Year 1 of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) Pilot Project, Erikson Institute worked with the Illinois communities of Greater East St. Louis, the City of Kankakee, the Village of Bradley, and the Village of Bourbonnais, completing implementation in 2017. Communities use results to inform strategic planning and initiatives. Below are examples on how they turned EDI data into collective action.

Greater East St. Louis

- **\$1 million increase in Early Childhood Block Grant funding for Greater East St. Louis.** EDI data was included in the Illinois early childhood block grant application, which resulted in nearly \$6 million allocated to East St. Louis School District 189 for preschool expansion for the 2018-2019 school year—a \$1 million increase from the previous year. The grant supports increasing the number of slots for preschool programs, ensuring high-quality care and programs, professional development for teachers, family education programs and strengthening support systems.
- **Applying for Preschool Expansion Grant in an identified area of need.** The East St. Louis School District 189 and the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, a social service organization, analyzed the EDI data and concluded that the west side of the city—an area that showed high levels of vulnerability on the EDI map—did not have a high-quality early learning program serving the area. Together, the district and organization applied for a Preschool Expansion Grant from the Illinois State Board of Education requesting to open a pre-K center on the west side and increase the number of seats at a nearby early childhood center.
- **Stakeholders recommit themselves to children and their families.** The Early Learning Partnership held a stakeholders meeting themed “Recommitment to Early Childhood” in February 2018 to re-energize efforts, and to elevate the importance of early childhood school readiness, and the holistic health and well-being of children and their families.
- **Connecting the environment to a child’s development in Greater East St. Louis.** While the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) controlled East St. Louis’ housing projects, funding cuts and years of neglect affected the safety and health of children living in public housing, and EDI data reflected significant child development vulnerabilities in these areas. In September 2017, U.S. HUD Secretary Ben Carson restored control of the housing projects back to local government, allowing for an opportunity to create real change driven by the community. Having already completed the EDI in 2017, community groups are ready and equipped with the data they need to develop a comprehensive strategy to improve the quality of life for children and their families.



Kankakee and Iroquois Counties

- **\$2.1 million over six years to address childhood trauma and resources for families in Kankakee County.** In July 2018, the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley was awarded a \$200,000 planning grant from the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation for the Children's Mental Health Initiative 2.0. The initiative enables mental and physical health providers, schools, parents, youth and other community organizations to develop a coordinated system of care for children and families. EDI data showing high rates of vulnerability for children's social-emotional development was included in the grant proposal and strengthened the case that environmental trauma and stress, anxiety, or depression can affect a child's ability to meet their full potential. If the planning process is successful, in November 2019, they will receive a second grant of \$2.1 million over six years to implement their plans.
- **Volunteers take action to help children in local Bradley schools.** The EDI vulnerability data for the social-emotional domain was paramount in encouraging community churches to "adopt" area schools and support classroom needs by having parishioners volunteer their time, talent and resources to Bradley schools. Volunteers read to children and donate essential items that families need.
- **Data used to address public health through several grant applications.** Partnership for a Healthy Community incorporated EDI data in their annual Community Health Status Assessment, a report on the state of the local public health system, which reveals issues and informs action plans to address them. The Partnership also used the data in several grant proposals focused on child and adolescent health.
- **Community Collaborative meets to discuss on how to implement data.** Turning to EDI data, The United Way of Kankakee and the Kankakee Area YMCA held a townhall in September 2018 to talk about the opioid crisis and its affect on children and families, and addressing the trauma.

City of Kankakee

- **Child psychiatrist hired in an effort to better address social-emotional issues in children.** The EDI data helped connect Kankakee School District 111 with professionals working with children in the Riverside Medical Center Mental Health Unit to collaborate on ideas to address social-emotional issues. As a result, a new child psychiatrist was hired and is implementing social-emotional activities in their work with children.
- **Discussion on Creating a Trauma-Informed Community.** District 111 initiated discussion about creating a Trauma-Informed Community using the EDI data. This included piloting interventions for training teachers and community members on the impact of trauma and strategies to support youth.



Village of Bourbonnais

- **School District 53 uses results to inform parents and community.** The Bourbonnais Elementary School District 53 provided parents with EDI results specifically on the physical health and well-being domain and identified ways to support their children in this area. Results in the social and emotional skills domain also prompted the district to move toward a Trauma-Informed Schools approach.
- **Teachers attend training to incorporate stimulating activities in the classroom.** District 53 partnered with TheraPlay to provide local teachers with training on Sunshine Circles, a teacher-led technique that incorporates playful, cooperative and nurturing activities that lead to better social, emotional and cognitive development in the classroom.

Village of Bradley

- **Teachers attend mental health training.** Bradley School District 61 teachers, staff and community members engaged in Project 375, a program co-founded by NFL wide receiver Brandon Marshall to help promote awareness of mental health. All teachers attended an eight-hour, social-emotional training.
- **Mayor and Chief of Police to be included in trainings in an effort to become a Trauma-Informed Community.** Per their review of the EDI data, Bradley Chief of Police, Mike Johnston, in collaboration with Mayor Bruce Adams of Bradley, asked to be included in any and all trainings or meetings that addressed trauma and mental health of youth. The intent is to build capacity so that the Village of Bradley is a Trauma-Informed Community.

Oak Park

- **Inspiring community-driven housing development that keeps residents top of mind in Oak Park.** Village officials looked to EDI data to help determine the best location for a new housing development for families with limited economic resources. The EDI maps showed that the initial location of the development could isolate children and families from early childhood programs and services and prompted the exploration of other sites.

Erikson Institute

- **Providing leaders with the skills and knowledge to apply EDI data to their work.** Erikson Institute reserves space for EDI partners in its Early Childhood Leadership Academy programs, which equip early childhood advocates, decision-makers and influencers with the resources, skills, and deep knowledge about the field to support efforts to effect policy and systems change.

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