FACT SHEET:
EDI and the Community

Erikson and the EDI

In 2016, Erikson launched a three-year pilot project to provide the Early Development Instrument to communities throughout Illinois. Erikson works with existing community collaborative groups with strong partnerships in the public and private school systems. EDI results inform strategic and future community planning.

Year 1: 2016-2017 School Year
- Greater East St. Louis
- City of Kankakee and the Villages of Bourbonnais and Bradley

Year 2: 2017-2018 School Year
- Village of Oak Park

Year 3: 2018-2019 School Year
- Villages of Skokie and Morton Grove
- City of Rockford

Rockford

Villages of Skokie and Morton Grove

Village of Oak Park

City of Kankakee and Villages of Bourbonnais and Bradley

Greater East St. Louis

This project is generously supported by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation and an anonymous donor.

The Early Development Instrument

The Early Development Instrument (EDI), a population-based measure similar to a kindergarten census, assesses the ability of kindergarteners to meet expectations in five developmental domains. It is a holistic approach that measures the school readiness of children.

The EDI was created in 1998 by the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University in Toronto and remains in use throughout Canada. The University of California Los Angeles' (UCLA) Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities has been implementing the tool in more than 50 communities across the U.S. since 2009.

More so than ever, research is confirming that what happens in early childhood plays a big role in lifelong health, well-being, and learning. Communities find value in using the EDI as a needs assessment to better understand trends and patterns in child development and to make sure resources meet the needs of children and their families.

By identifying and addressing areas of need early on, communities can increase the chances of children reaching their greatest potential.

EDI Developmental Domains
Includes sample questions from the EDI survey.

Physical Health and Well-being
Can the child hold a pencil? Is the child able to manipulate objects?

Social Competence
Is the child able to follow class routines? Is the child self-confident?

Emotional Maturity
Does the child comfort a child who is crying or upset?

Language and Cognitive
Is the child interested in reading and writing? Can the child count and recognize numbers?

Communication Skills
Can the child tell a story? Can the child communicate with adults and children?

How Communities Can Use EDI Findings

The EDI provides communities with data that show where children have strengths and opportunities for growth across a geographic area. This population approach provides a community-level understanding in child development that local municipalities, schools, service providers and other stakeholders can use to inform where efforts and resources should be focused.

The EDI is designed to help communities:

✓ Foster better coordination and strengthen early childhood systems across the areas of early care and learning, family support, special needs, as well as, health, mental health and nutrition;

✓ Identify gaps in programs and services available to children and their families;

✓ Better align resources and tailor supports for young children as they enter the school system;

✓ Complement other existing assessments that yield individual child reports;

✓ Shift the problem solving from individual to community solutions at the policy and systems level; and

✓ Assess, over time, how the community's cumulative efforts are impacting children's development.

EDI Maps

EDI data are mapped by neighborhoods using U.S. Census-designated boundaries, and show in which geographic areas children are doing well or experiencing challenges.

Each neighborhood is assigned one of five color-shaded categories that represents increasing levels of vulnerability percentages in one or more developmental domains. High vulnerability could indicate future challenges in life, including low academic achievement and health.

In addition to mapping vulnerability, community assets such as hospitals, schools, social services are also plotted on the map to better understand the local resources available to families. Communities can also request additional Census data be included such as percentages of families and children in poverty and single parent families, years at current residence and much more to add context to the maps.
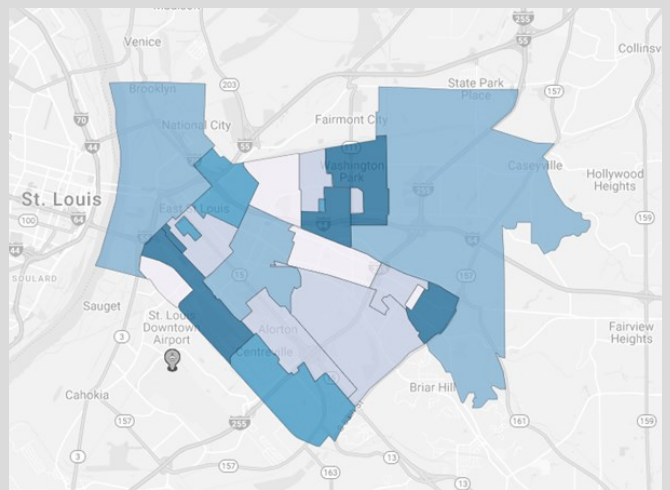
EDI results for Greater East St. Louis. The darker shade of blue indicates a higher percentage of vulnerable children and the lighter shade of blue indicates a lower percentage of vulnerable children.