



Community Parenting Support Saturation: Alignment Rockford

The Community Parenting Support Saturation Program was born out of a series of conversations between a small group of foundations about opportunities to develop strategies and interventions that effectively strengthen the way families engage with their children to ultimately improve their child’s outcome. They posed the question: “Is it possible to significantly and measurably increase the number and percentage of children who successfully arrive at kindergarten fully ready to thrive by more effectively engaging and supporting primary caregivers in their parenting efforts and activities?”



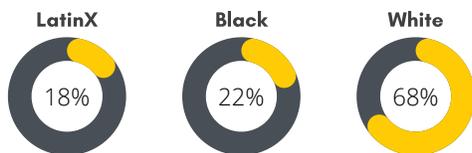
In 2019, Illinois Action for Children (IAC) was selected as the Lead Implementation Partner to provide strategic direction of the project and to support the pilot communities. The three communities, Aurora, North Lawndale, and Rockford, are part of this innovative effort to implement a wide array of parenting interventions locally to support parent’s skills and knowledge in parenting that ultimately leads to supporting their children’s growth, learning and readiness for kindergarten.

Project Vision and Outcome

To ensure that parents are embraced and supported as the most important influences in their children’s early learning, and every child starts kindergarten thriving, ready to learn and excited about school.

Why Rockford, Illinois?

Rockford boundaries include rural and city living. With an estimated population of 145,609, about 23 percent of its residents live in poverty. The racial/ethnic makeup of Rockford, IL is:



The Rockford community has many strengths and some challenges, including education concerns that greatly impact the community. Alignment Rockford has been working to address these challenges with efforts to improve graduation rates and close the achievement gap for its students of color. Starting early to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of its youngest learners (more than 22,047 children ages 0-5 years old live in Rockford), Alignment Rockford has a unique opportunity through the Community Parenting Support Saturation program to ensure its youngest learners grow up to be thriving and successful community leaders in Rockford.

“The funds and training we will receive from this grant will accelerate our movement in our Rockford Region to ensure that our earliest learners and citizens have the supports they need to thrive. “We feel this starts with their caregivers and the adults they encounter in life. As a result, through our focused, targeted saturation strategies, we hope to teach our entire community the key role they play in positively shaping a child’s life.”

—Anisha Grimmitt, Executive Director of Alignment Rockford

Alignment Rockford

In 2020, **Alignment Rockford** was selected to advance the Community Parenting Support Saturation Program. Through Alignment Rockford’s Ready to Learn initiative, their community leaders and core team will support the implementation of this project in the Rockford community. The core team consists of community leaders from Alignment Rockford, , Rockford Public Schools, Transform Rockford, with support from Erikson Institute. The Alignment Rockford organization has more than 150 community leaders (i.e., City of Rockford, Unitarian Universalist Church, Head Start, Easter Seals, YMCA, United Way, YWCA, Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, Crusader Community Health, and many more) that volunteer their time and resources to advancing education opportunities locally.



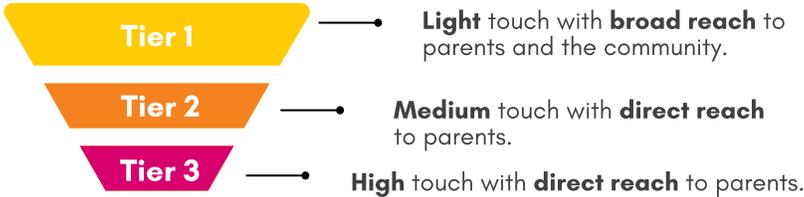
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Community Parenting Support Saturation Approach

Alignment Rockford’s Ready to Learn initiative will be implementing a wide array of parenting interventions for families with young children. The parenting interventions and supports offered will allow families to identify and participate in the supports that best fit their need and interests.



Anticipated Impact
Through a community-wide effort with diverse partners, including families and other early childhood organizations, the project will provide families with young children the supports that they need to prepare their young children for kindergarten and life.

Tier 1

- **Beginning to Babble**—An evidenced-informed mobile app for parents that remind them to engage with their child through tips and ideas with a focus on language development.
- **The Basics**—A public campaign to reach parents of children birth-to-3 with five evidence-based parenting and caregiving principles about what is important for their children’s development and learning experiences based on those principles.

Tier 2

- **Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas**—An evidence-based program for Latino parents with young children that uses a two-generation approach to build parent leadership skills and knowledge to promote family well-being and positive outcomes for children.
- **The Incredible Years**—A series of evidence-based programs to prevent and treat young children's behavior problems and promote their social, emotional and academic competence, including a 9-13 session parenting skills program for parents of children birth to 3 and a 18-20 session program for parents of children from 3 to 5.

Tier 3

- Increase the enrollment of families in programs like **Early Intervention** and **Home Visiting** programs.

About Alignment Rockford

Alignment Rockford's mission is to align community resources in support of public school strategies to raise student achievement, improve the health and happiness of children, and advance the economic and social well-being of their community. Alignment Rockford envisions all children being kindergarten ready, all students graduating from high school with marketable employment skills and enrolling in post-secondary education and training. They are eager to live, work, learn, create, and play in the Rockford Region as contributing adults.

About Illinois Action for Children

Illinois Action for Children (I AFC) is a catalyst for organizing, developing, and supporting strong families and powerful communities where children matter most. We believe that lasting change comes only by empowering families and communities with knowledge leading to power; that institutions change only with resources and leadership; and that systems change only through the lever of informed power. Our work is therefore delivered in a series of concentric and interwoven circles of engagement, education, and empowerment, with children at the center of all we do.

The Community Parenting Support Saturation Program is generously funded by our philanthropic partners: CME Group, Crown Family Philanthropies, J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation, Illinois Children’s Healthcare Foundation, Irving Harris Foundation, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, and Steans Family Foundation.

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