

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL CHILDCARE ANALYSIS & PROPOSED PLAN FOR BOONE COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

The Boone County Economic Development Corporation (Boone EDC) desires to hire a highly qualified contractor to provide a comprehensive analysis of childcare in Boone County and to develop best practices and recommendations for the community. This initiative aims to address the need for accessible childcare services to support families in the local community. This study is funded by a grant from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)'s Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) office, with support from local Boone County employers.

BACKGROUND

Early Learning Indiana's Closing the Gap profile for Boone County indicates:

- Boone County's existing childcare programs reach only 31.85% of those needing care.
- 77.65% of our community's programs offer subsidized care.
- The care for one child costs 8.3% of the median family income.

OBJECTIVES

We anticipate this childcare study will lay the foundation for a childcare initiative in Boone County. Our ultimate goals are to:

- Expand accessible childcare services to families in Boone County
- Promote work-life balance for parents/guardians in the community.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected contractor will be responsible for addressing the following topics and needs:

- Assessment of existing childcare facilities in Boone County¹
 - Inventory of existing childcare centers, in-home daycares, preschools, and other relevant facilities
 - Analysis of capacity, including the number of available slots, age groups served, and operating hours
- Accessibility and affordability²
 - Examination of the accessibility of childcare services, including proximity to residential areas and workplaces

¹ Early Learning Indiana has already conducted research on existing childcare facilities in Boone County, so the contractor should be prepared to utilize their data and should not anticipate additional costs in conducting this activity.

² See note above.

- Evaluation of affordability for families, considering fees, subsidies, and financial assistance programs available
- Quality of Care
 - Evaluation of the quality of childcare services based on standards and guidelines
 - Assessment of staff qualifications, training, and turnover rates
 - Examination of curriculum, learning materials, and enrichment activities provided
- Parental, Provider, and Employer Needs
 - Survey of parents/guardians, childcare providers, and employers to understand their childcare needs, preferences, and challenges
 - Analysis of factors influencing parental decision-making regarding childcare options
- Regulatory and Policy Analysis
 - Review of existing regulations, policies, and licensing requirements governing childcare services
 - Identification of potential regulatory barriers or areas for improvement
- Best Practices and Recommendations
 - Research best practices in childcare, with examples from other communities
 - Development of recommendations for enhancing childcare accessibility, affordability, and quality in Boone County.
 - Identify potential funding sources for future projects

We anticipate that the selected contractor will host several focus groups to collect some of this data: with service providers, with parents/families, with companies, etc.

DELIVERABLES

The firm/consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

- A comprehensive report detailing the findings of the childcare study, including data analysis, key observations, and recommendations outlined in scope of work
- Presentation of findings to stakeholders, including childcare providers, community organizations, and/or local government officials
- Any additional materials or documentation generated during the study

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All interested parties must meet the following eligibility criteria to submit a proposal:

- Demonstrated experience in and understanding of childcare programs
- Familiarity with local, state, and/or federal regulations, policies, and licensing requirements
- Strong organizational and communication skills

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Interested parties should submit a proposal in PDF form that includes the following:

- Details of the organization's or individual's experience and qualifications
- Proposed methodology and approach to conducting the childcare study
- Budget estimate, including detailed cost breakdown
- Detailed project timeline
- References from previous clients or partners
- Samples of previous work

BUDGET

The total budget proposed for this initiative should cover all costs, including, but not limited to program development, implementation, staffing, materials, travel, and mileage.

EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Experience and expertise in childcare field
- Alignment with the objectives and scope of this initiative
- Cost effectiveness
- Strength of references and samples provided

PROJECT TIMELINE

RFP released:	March 7, 2024
Submission deadline:	April 5, 2024
Selection & Notification:	April 19, 2024 ³
Project Start Date:	May 1, 2024 ⁴
Project Completion:	October 15, 2024

PROPOSAL RESPONSE

Please provide a proposal in PDF format to Molly Whitehead at molly@betterinboone.org by 5 pm EST on Friday, April 5, 2024.

QUESTIONS

Any questions should be directed to Molly Whitehead at molly@betterinboone.org no later than Wednesday, March 20th to ensure time for a response. Any questions submitted after March 20th will be answered if and as time allows.

³ While we have received notice of the award from FSSA, we are currently undergoing the state's contract process. We have been granted permission to begin the RFP process but will not be able to enter a contract with our vendor until the contract is executed.

⁴ Project state date will be dependent on the contract process described above. The Boone EDC will work with the chosen vendor on an appropriate timeline.