



April | 18

Community Early Learning Survey

The Early Learning Alliance Network is pleased to provide the following overview of a limited response, community early learning survey.



In April of 2018 the Early Learning Alliance Network conducted a limited survey focused on perspectives in our community as they relate to early learning. The following provides an overview of findings from this survey. Note that while participation was not at our target levels, data does demonstrate some need for further inquiry around early learning in our community.

Outreach: The survey was disseminated through social media with targeted reach on parents and families in Fishers, Indiana.

Participants: There were 108 total respondents in the twelve-day period of data collection. The group providing the most input was parents (75%). However, as shown below, there was a cross section of feedback based on self-reported role in the community.

Preschool teacher	15%
Early childhood caregiver	4%
Elementary teacher	9%
Elementary School/School District Administrator	2%
Elementary support staff	0%
Parent	75%
Grandparent	3%
Non-Parent community member	1%
Preschool Director or Owner	11%
Other youth worker or volunteer (librarian, bus driver, camp counselor, coach, etc.)	5%
Youth support professional (therapist, physician, etc.)	2%
Other	9%

Respondents were asked to report their current home zip code. 33% of respondents were from 46037, 20% were from 46038, 15% from 46060, and the remaining 32% were from surrounding areas (ex: 46040, 46055, 46250, 46033, and 46256 zip codes). 44% of respondents have lived in the Fishers/Hamilton County community more than 10 years, 27% from 5-10 years, 19% from 3-5 years, 8% from 1-3 years, and 1% 1 year or less. Note that individuals living in or working in Fishers were invited to respond.

Strengths in our Community: Participants were asked to identify the top three strengths in our community (from their perspective). The following provides an overview of findings.

Parks and outdoor play spaces	57%
Quality of public and private elementary schools	55%
Public safety services and overall community safety	49%
Education is valued in the community	47%
Family support and engagement	36%
Most children have basic needs met and arrive at school ready to learn	33%



Opportunities for early learning experiences	26%
Most children have access to and receive health care services	25%
Access to different types of early learning programs and child care options	19%
Dedicated early childhood caregivers and educators	16%
Access to technology in home and school environments	14%
Other (please specify) - Parents have the ability to pay for high quality care and this funding can help with the costs needed to provide good care - Good overall economic climate	2%

Our initial hypothesis was that due in part to the demographics of our community, the majority of respondents would identify "Most children have basic needs met and arrive at school ready to learn" as a strength. However, that was among the bottom six.

Challenges in our Community: Participants were asked to identify the top three challenges in our community (from their perspective). The following provides an overview of findings.

Cost of early childhood care	63%
Focus on standardized testing in elementary school	61%
Staff wages and turnover at early childhood programs	47%
Expectations for Kindergarten readiness and transitioning to elementary school	29%
Focus on academic skills in preschool	27%
Availability of sick care for children with working parents	25%
Communication mechanisms between preschools and elementary schools	23%
Diversity among early learning teachers and leaders	21%
Parent education about early learning and basic parenting skills	17%
Services and coordination of care for children with special needs	14%
Other (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not any support for people moving in from other states. • Need for more recess • Availability of early childhood care • Boys' natural instincts and learning needs are stifled and treated as "bad behavior". • Non-traditional child care hours (most programs start at 9:30) • Teacher Pay • Too much emphasis on technology in early childhood and 	11%



elementary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough diversity programs • Not enough affordable options and diversity of students • Too much academic focus in early childhood instead of play based learning and focus on social skills 	
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The focus on standardized testing in elementary has been a continual challenge facing our community throughout other data and outreach efforts of the Early Learning Alliance Network. Currently our schools engage in state data collection in 3rd grade for iRead (the scores on this county wide are continuously above 90%). They also engage in progress measures using NWEA three times per year (fall, winter, spring) through a digital, adaptive testing system. Data from other Early Learning Alliance Network sources demonstrates that because NWEA begins in Kindergarten there are expectations/concerns from parents that (1) children be “ready” for these assessment before entering Kindergarten, (2) children be trained on how to use an iPad to complete NWEA without technical difficulty before Kindergarten, and (3) that iRead and NWEA reading scores are directly tied to early learning progress in individual reading levels of students.

Access to Early Learning Experiences in our Community: Participants were asked to rate access to early learning experiences in our community.

★★★★★	28%
★★★★	44%
★★★	18%
★★	8%
★	2%

Quality of Early Learning Experiences in our Community: Participants were asked to rate access to early learning experiences in our community.

★★★★★	23%
★★★★	46%
★★★	27%
★★	4%
★	0%

Observations of early learning/early childhood in other communities that should be happening in or available in our Community: Participants were asked to provide open-ended responses. Responses were coded based on general theme. In all, 14 themes emerged during analysis. The following provides an overview of frequencies related to those themes. (Open-ended responses are available in the Appendix of this report)



Access to care	27%
Active learning	20%
Cost	13%
Diversity	4%
Early Intervention	2%
Employee pay	2%
Concerns about focus on academics	13%
K12 connections	16%
Parent/family education	9%
Need for play	22%
Positive overall	2%
Concerns about standardized testing	4%
State regulations not addressing needs of Fishers citizens	18%
Working parents with unmet needs	11%

Observations of challenges in working with, educating, and/or parenting children ages 0-8 in our Community: Participants were asked to provide open-ended responses. Responses were coded based on general theme. In all, 14 themes emerged during analysis. The following provides an overview of frequencies related to those themes. (Open-ended responses are available in the Appendix of this report)

Concerns about academic focus in early learning	15%
Communication through systems and with parents/families	6%
Cost of child care	26%
Ability to make informed choices about childcare and best early learning opportunities	24%
K12 practices not aligned with best practice	16%
Disagreement over key skills	3%
Parenting challenges	11%
Concerns over lack of play in learning	11%
Policies that are conflicting or not supportive of best practice	5%
Parent involvement	11%
Concerns about social emotional development in children	18%
Concerns about special needs children receiving support necessary	5%
Issues facing staffing in early	8%



learning	
Working parents with unmet needs	6%

Concerns related to early learning/early childhood specific to individual situations:

Participants were asked to provide open-ended responses. Responses were coded based on general theme. In all, 11 themes emerged during analysis. The following provides an overview of frequencies related to those themes. (Open-ended responses are available in the Appendix of this report)

Concerns about academic focus in early learning	26%
Concerns about access to quality care that meets individual needs	11%
Cost of child care	9%
Concerns about fine/gross motor skills	16%
Parenting	6%
Policy concerns	5%
Concerns about social emotional development in children	30%
Concerns over lack of play in learning	11%
Concerns about special needs children receiving support necessary	9%
Issues facing staffing in early learning	18%
Working parents with unmet needs	4%

Additional comments related to early learning/early childhood opportunities in our community:

Participants were asked to provide open-ended responses. Responses were coded based on general theme. In all, 10 themes emerged during analysis. The following provides an overview of frequencies related to those themes. (Open-ended responses are available in the Appendix of this report)

Concerns about access to indoor community play spaces for young children	19%
Concerns about understanding and use of best practices for early learning	15%
Communication and collaboration around early learning	9%
Concerns over K12 meeting needs	12%
Meeting parent needs	12%
Nature-based programs	4%



Outreach to parents	8%
Pay for early learning professionals	8%
Policies that support all families	8%
Positive efforts in the community towards collaboration	15%
Concerns about social emotional development in children	8%

The idea of indoor play spaces for young children was also evident in other Early Learning Alliance Network data sets. Currently, the indoor play opportunities in Fishers are most commonly noted as Conner Prairie (closed on Monday), SkyZone (closed on Monday), Bounce U (limited availability for ages 0-4, rotating schedules), the indoor play space at the Lutheran church (rotating schedules, but only free indoor play space in the city), and the library (limited participation due to registration). Most structured non-preschool, activities (gymnastics, dance, sports, music, etc.) targeted for children under five years old require weekly participation, member, and/or registration.

Current state data reflects that there are over 21,500 children ages 0-4 in Fishers. We have no comprehensive and accurate data around the number of children who participate in early learning, or the number of early learning/day care/pre-school providers in Fishers.



Appendix: Open Ended Responses

Is there anything around early learning and/or early childhood that is happening in other communities that you wish was happening or available here?
A Spanish immersion program would be wonderful in our community. More opportunities for outdoor risky play and outdoor learning in our school and community. Also, more offerings like the Innovations course at HSE, giving students meaningful real world, hands-on learning experiences.
Some families can't afford the kids early education's cost, so their kids can't go to preschool or if they go their family are struggling financially like us. Why there is no VPK program as an early education for kids like the other states. We wish there was so the kids had the equal rights for learning and being ready to go to school.
Partnership & support from licensing rather than audit & blame Childcare regulations more aligned with elementary schools (why can we only have 15 kids with a degreed KG teacher & elementary schools can & do have 22 - 28, why can elementary schools have multiple classes on playgrounds at the same time & we can only have one) - these drive costs, of already expensive care, higher, which is driving down teacher pay
Longer recess times!!! Early elementary kids need time to be active and play.
We need more daycare spots for the kids of two full time working parents! Nobody should have to wait a year to get into infant care...
I wish there were more preschool available at an affordable cost with convenient hours for working parents.
I don't know if it's better anywhere else, but the focus on standardized testing is insane. These kids spend weeks of school time on testing that does nothing but tell schools how teachers are teaching. It wouldn't be such a challenge to get through the required curriculum if they didn't waste so much time prepping kids for the tests.
More diversity, better pay for employees, more affordability
More outdoor experience learning and project based learning
Public preschool
As an elementary teacher I can say without a doubt that our kids are being pushed too hard academically too early in their lives. We don't celebrate trying and learning in our district we only talk about and share test scores. I hate that!!
I believe there should to be more preschool options in the Fishers area. There are several daycare options but not many for stay at home moms who want to enroll their children in half day programming for kindergarten readiness
More play-based and hands-on learning, and less focus on academics
There aren't statistically enough low income families to justify the need for On My Way Pre-k, but how do low income children of Hamilton county access quality care, CCDF usually has a wait list...and new centers like CLA on 37 have no interest in joining PTQ???
Pre-K programs at the elementary school
I wish we could know what to expect from teachers in HSE. Every year is a completely different experience and it's confusing to my kids.
Reggio inspired preschool and private kindergarten
More parent education, classes for parents on early literacy, discipline, milestones, etc.
Preschool programs that fit better with a working parent's schedule. We have to do daycare due to the shorter hours of preschool.
Diversity among centers would improve if CCDF was accepted on some level at all schools
Less worksheet curriculum and more hands-on approach
We have no resources for our population of families and students, we need a better infrastructure to support early learning and parents



More recess, more outdoor time, more free play time, less testing/academics
Better supports for child care funding for families in need, similar to On My Way Prek and the Indy Preschool Scholarship Program
Fishers is among the best I have seen and experienced, however there is always room to improve with communication, collaboration, and supporting teachers to serve kids.
I wish Early Learning Centers were not so focused on academic skills.
Testing and extra support services for our little ones.
Waldorf, Reggio, forest school, more outside time, process art instead of crafts
In our last school district kids were provided a chromebook without a fee. There were also no book fees as these were covered by the district/budget.
Public preschool, high ability kindergarten
Why can't we just let our kids be kids?
I'm not sure about other areas, but I think more unstructured play time is valuable for all early learners. In addition, I think emphasizing sight words instead of actual reading should be the norm up to and including kindergarten. I think pushing reading on kids too early is not necessary and could be detrimental.
Access for all. We live in affluent community, but not everyone has access.
Is the On My Way Prek going to become available for more counties?
Foreign language, open communication
Outdoor Learning
More take your child to work days. More field trips. More outdoor learning. More professional development for teachers. Employer support and subsidy for childcare and preschool. Inquiry-based and progressive school philosophies
We don't really have any parent education for fun stuff just warning classes about all the bass things!
More access to kids activities that aren't weekly commitments or during the day. We really have nowhere to just go as a family and hang out and play.
There is a lack of affordable options for working parents. Additionally, much of the programming in the community- parks, library etc. that I can engage in with my kids when I'm not working.
CCDF access and funding. Head start and private education excludes the middle class.
More Reggio style community play/explore options, community gardens
I wish we had more places for kids to hang out and play - we have Skyzone, Conner Prairie, and that's about it in Fishers. We get board of the library as a free thing to do in winter months.
I wish there was more recess time allowed for elementary students.

If applicable, what has been your biggest challenge in working with, educating, caring for, or parenting children ages 0-8 in our community?
Changing the conversation around Kindergarten readiness as too much focus has been placed on academic achievement in ways that are not developmentally appropriate for our children.
No support from school system.
Educating and parenting
Finding & retaining quality staff. It is almost impossible to find degreed teachers willing to work for \$24K per year, without state benefits & summers off (we compete with public schools), but with the low preschool teacher to child ratios we cannot afford to pay more
Paying more than college tuition for a good daycare for each of my kids. (We are lucky to be able to "afford" it due to good jobs and planning well.)
The cost of childcare is the biggest challenge.
There is a focus on bullying that is completely out of control. They have defined bullying as not liking what someone else is doing, including saying "we don't want to play with you." It leads to kids never



hearing "no" from peers, which makes them impossible as adults - actually the never become adults. On the other side, kids who are just being kids are labeled as bullies, confronted by resource officers, and makes school a very negative place for them.
I was a preschool teacher for 8 years. We have a wealth of quality daycares but not teachers due to poor pay and benefits. Parents feel like the teachers make more than they do and we are often treated poorly
Cost of child care and availability
We enrolled our child to go to kindergarten this fall, but we're informed today that State legislation passed a bill taking away funding for August born children. We were told our child's registration for kindergarten was accepted but the state pulled funding in March. By that time area preschools were full. My son will now go a year before his kindergarten year without any schooling. I am worried about his academic progress missing out on school for a year.
I have to make every effort to keep myself focused on kids because district policies and practices pull me into curriculum that is not tied to my standards and makes it nearly impossible for me to do what is right for my kids overall (we still just talk about reading and math).
Parent self-involvement
Educating parents
Entitlement
Parents judging other parents and how they parent. I feel all parents are trying to do the best they can.
Trying to navigate elementary school with smart kids. They are bored out of their minds!
Not getting enough feedback from teachers as to how and what my children are learning everyday and whether they are having any trouble doing so.
The high turnover rate of teaching partners. Standards for teaching preschool in childcare settings are very low, no Bachelors required. Leads to anyone being able to get the job and lower wages, even for someone like me who has a Bachelors in education.
Making sure she is learning what she needs to learn to be prepared for school when she becomes school age.
Staffing qualified, dedicated, passionate teachers.
Finding affordable childcare
No resources that are specific to our city, what is available for Indy is supposed to just fit for us and it doesn't.
The cost of sending kids to preschool or daycare. I stay home because the cost is too much.. I also know once being in a childcare position that wages are low and turn over is high.
Parents often focusing too much on academics and less on play. Some preschools are doing worksheets and other inappropriate tasks with children.
Childcare options are limited and expensive.
Childcare is expensive. Preschool teachers are highly underpaid and therefore turnover is high. The experience for the child varies based on the skill, education, and talent of the teacher.
Lack of opportunities for children to play. Kids are forced to do academic work too early and they are missing out on open-ended play opportunities.
My biggest challenge has been finding QUALITY care/preschool for my son with unusual work hours in our family. Quality programs don't often start early enough to meet the needs of our family.
Communication with parents. They don't read the parent letters or come in for conferences.
Lack of recess in elementary, lack of secular play-based options for early childhood
The pressure to hold back your kid so that they are " academically ready. " While some parents are doing it for the right reason and some kids aren't truly ready, there are still some who do it to put their kid at an advantage whether it be for sports or academics. Seems strange to think that my child who is ready for school but on the young side could be in class with kids who are an entire year older. I feel like it is not normal to send your kid to kindergarten at the time they are supposed to go but instead



even doing 2 years of kindergarten 1 private and then repeating at public.
Shift in developmental readiness; children are not as ready for school developmentally as they were 20 years ago.
Cost of childcare
Lack of pencil grip & hand writing and a decline in children recognizing the letters in the alphabet
We need to be less competitive with our children they are all individuals
Handheld technology without a doubt. My own kids plus others I've observed choose sitting with their heads bent over devices way more than unstructured social and play time. I think technology has it's place but we're promoting it way too much to young kids.
The community preschool has a very twisted focus on academics that is highly inappropriate for children at this developmental level.
Expectations--cost, academics, etc. People expect a lot out of young children instead of just letting them be kids and at a low cost.
The cost.
Open communication, discipline polices
The disconnect between how the state of research on how children learn (based on developmental and education science) and the traditional preschool and public school curriculum. It contributes directly to parents hyper-focused on academics and is at the expense of high quality early learning experiences of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers
Finding a preschool (outside of public developmental preschool) for children with challenges and special needs. Also finding a program for young 2s (such a huge difference between a summer birthday and fall birthday 2 year old in the same class)
We have a child with a disability and it has been next to impossible to find the support we need at a preschool of our choice, there is no support for kids with special needs in our early learning. Preschools don't know how to identify, schools don't adequately support preK IEPs and it's on parents to figure out this broken system.
Addiction to iPads
Potty training
Finding preschool that is all day or all year.
As a degreed Early Childhood Educator with 20 years experience and continued education the one entity that surprises me is that most parents don't understand the benefits of low ratio or what quality care is suppose to look like as well as what they are paying for I see mothers post that \$3.50-\$4 hr for child care is outrageous yet they aren't factoring in the kids are fed 3-4 times a day, quality play based learning supplies aren't cheap for use either and kids are with us for 50/60 hours per week they are utility cost, maintenance, etc. in addition to 25% income tax. That all adds up, most home based programs charging between \$175-200 week are making \$2 hour for labor. People were horrified to see servers making this and they aren't nurturing and educating codependent humans.
We have so little communication from our school district, it is a huge struggle for my family. We have to learn the system from friends and neighbors.

What early childhood/learning concerns do you have that are specific to your program/school or personal situation?
We recognize the importance of outdoor play but are limited in our outdoor space.
No way to support my children, since they are behind. No time for teachers to help them! So they get left behind.
Knowing what options are available for preschool or daycare.
Reading



I wish we could participate in the states benefits program. We cannot get enough people (50% required) to participate to be able to offer our teachers group health insurance and we cannot legally reimburse them for health care costs. I would love support and/or training at our schools for how to work with behavior/emotional/physical issues (special needs may exist but aren't always diagnosed at this young age).
Finding a balance between academic learning and just letting the kids play and have fun. Choosing the right preschool environment.
Figuring out before and after school and summer care for elementary age and up.
The cost and availability of early childhood learning that is not religious based.
I stay home now because I cannot afford childcare. Full time for a toddler plus before and after care for my 1st grader is completely outrageous. I couldn't work if I wanted to
Teacher turnover (teacher pay)
In our case state funding is at fault, but more affordable options would be helpful.
Just too much focus on academics we need everyone to understand the negative consequences of that.
Are iPads replacing a human being reading to our children? Do parents still value books in the home?
Quality of early childhood educators- teacher qualifications are too low and we cannot afford to hire the qualified ones. I would also like to see more opportunity for early childhood educators to continue their education in the fishers area- most opportunities are in Indianapolis and too far for teachers to drive after work
We don't have many secular, part-time, play-based preschools in Hamilton County. This excludes many families that are not religious or practice a different faith.
Affordable access to Quality early education
Staff turnover
Cost of childcare in the area is outrageous
Push for Kindergarten readiness while neglecting the social-emotional needs of children
I would imagine this is just a working parent problem, but I'm fearful our beloved home daycare won't be enough preparation to start kindergarten, even though it is licensed and they do learning activities. I can't afford to send her to a preschool program and continue at our daycare. I teach elementary in HSE schools so I know what a lot of these kids come in already knowing, and I don't want my child at a deficit, but I also don't want her missing out on the love and nurturing she gets from her care now. It breaks my heart to think she'll have to spend her final year as non-elementary kid in a center all day just so she will have enough skills to enter kindergarten. I don't know how working parents are able to send their kids to most half day programs around us that are most recommended.
K12 teachers are still embracing outdated practices and not being made to stop.
The transfer of professional development and communication from preschool to public schools. Educators and adults valuing young children as capable and full of knowledge. There seems to be a disconnect in self-directed learning of young children.
Anyone being able to get the job, and low wages of childcare and preschool workers. In my classroom of 4 year olds we are hard at work prepping the children for kindergarten, it's not just "babysitting" and it deserves to be treated as more.
Staff turnover at her daycare.
I think it would benefit children to focus more on a structured routine and environment. The trend now seems to be to allow children too many choices.
I can't find a trusted childcare provider for the Fall.
Too much focus on academics too early, it is bad for our kids and in the long term is bad for our city and schools.
Not enough free play and not enough outdoor time in kindergarten and elementary school
I would like to see the classrooms at the preschool separated by age and offer an older classroom that better prepares students for kindergarten.. more writing, and math.



Teaching kids to read too early. Kids' brains are not ready to learn to read until age 6-7 and we have young 5 year olds who then struggle because they are missing underlying phonological skills
My son turned 5 in October, but is bored and has outgrown his preschool curriculum. A non-private pre-kindergarten would be great.
Parents' lack of understanding of high quality, developmentally appropriate practices along with too many programs not utilizing DAP in their classrooms
Finding quality child care options open past 6pm
Costs and quality of education.
Prep-K in my school is too academic. Expectations or too high and kids are missing out on learning social problem solving skills.
Recent teacher turnover being filled with teachers without needed early childhood education backgrounds.
Defining our early childhood program. Who we are and what makes us unique.
Managing behavior
Competitiveness with academics and sports at early ages is nearly out of control. Many parents value early academic instruction with kids sitting at desks and learning from very early on as well as year round sports at very early ages. People in this community forget that child led play, non-adult directed is necessary for child development and constructive use of time is a lifelong and necessary skill that is completely being missed by overscheduling. Kids are burning at both ends in large part due to parental competition and it's sad. Just because school expectations have changed (ie kindergarten is the new first grade) doesn't mean it's developmentally appropriate. Back to basics is needed in fishers. We do not need more formal early learning. We need parents reading aloud to their children instead of faces in cell phones. We need kids playing outdoors with siblings, friends instead of constant organized sports.
Just allowing kids to be kids. Seems to be so much pressure on academics/testing and results of testing at a early age. Also the emphasis on the NWEA scores alone and the high ability program.
Not having the resources to help children with delays or needs such as OT, PT, etc
Family stress and parent education
Staff turnover
Too much focus on academics too early, preschools shouldn't be worried about iRead scores
There's not enough recess time at elementary and intermediate schools. Kids need unplugged free time throughout the school day and they're not getting enough. I think allowing kids to be more physically and socially active can cut down on behavior/mental health issues.
Parent education is key and lacking. We have a community of parents who push their children to achieve milestones that are not natural and then wonder why their students are sick, depressed, and have extreme anxiety. They then look for the schools for resource. It is a cycle that is causing tremendous problems for the community.
We believe in learning through play, but it's hard to get people to buy into that sometimes because everyone wants to prepare their kids for the next thing instead of focusing on where they are NOW.
The lack of qualified, professional teachers due to low salary base and lack of priority.
Open communication, discipline polices, meeting academic needs of advanced learners
Cost of childcare
The majority of parents value academic mastery beginning at age 3. It is the norm. They stop feeling good about their decision to just let their children play, or paying for any experience that isn't geared toward building academic skills in a very traditional way, a classroom way.
Safety in the schools
There is just not a lot to do in Fishers with kids - parks and events are one thing but there's just nothing here
Fine motor and gross motor skills are lacking in children that are preschool age



Children are afraid to get a speck of dirt on them when crafting or playing. Extremely sad
Pressure to be potty trained before the child is ready - not all are ready by third birthday, especially young 3 year olds.
Behavior issues. Managing behaviors in my classroom. Lack of self control, not able to self regulate
Lack of training from preschools and lack of support for early IEPs especially those that come from out of state.
Affordable options for pre-k- with before and aftercare factored in.
Access to OT feeding services in preschool
My son with special needs would be in a developmental preschool without integration with normal or average peers.
Parents accepting if/when their child needs additional services for special needs, etc.
On a community career perspective we have children going into kindergarten now just after their 5th birthday with the same expectations as they had for kids an entire year older. 90% of the brain develops the first full 5 years that includes fine motor printing, concept correlations and very novice mechanical reading skills developing.
Lack of available programs that are every morning of the week for parents who work part time like me. There is literally one place that I have found.
I do worry there is too much focus on academics and not enough free play.

What other comments do you have about opportunities in the early learning community?
It would be wonderful to host parent ed events around the benefits of child-led play, risk taking, inquiry, emergent curriculum, project based learning, etc. I think we can continue to help better inform our parents, open dialogue and make learning more visible throughout our community as we continue to advocate for and change the conversation around what is best for our children.
Our revenues for each child per teacher are usually less than the public schools and we have to pay for our building costs & benefits out of this amount - not to mention that large centers are paying teachers to cover 11-12 hours a day. Preschools need support with more incentives that will attract & retain quality staff. Could there be a requirement that new public school teachers work in early childhood for a year, could the state provide tax exemptions for ECE teachers, could the state review regulations to balance quality with cost (right now the high costs do deteriorate quality because of teacher turnover), etc.?
There are no affordable options for parents who do not have very high incomes. I hate how many women (and men) don't get to choose to work or not, because someone is forced to stay home by the high price of childcare.
There should be a stronger emphasis on providing foreign language education to school age children in elementary schools. Many preschools provide it but it is not continued at the elementary level in our community.
Pay teachers and give them benefits. They will be happier and stay longer. Parents need more options for affordable care. Not everyone can afford \$1000+ a month for daycare
Thanks for including teachers in this!
Lower cost and more Pre-K programs in the elementary schools.
I would love to have a community discussion about how our schools are NOT changing to meet the needs of our kids.
I'd love to see more opportunities for nature-based play for young children and families.
I think our community has tons of opportunities for early childhood education and lots of cost support for low-income families to also have access. There are so many childcare options around.
Thank you for the support you provide!
Thank you for doing this survey, we need this kind of attention to early learning and parenting.



Many preschools are booked and with wait lists. Others are simply unaffordable for those of us who are middle class
Parents and schools are putting kids in front of screens too often.
There was no preschool in Carmel that fit our needs, so I had to start my own. Play-based, secular, part-time, nature exploration.
Public funding for preschool
Guidelines for parents on basic knowledge and skills children should have from birth to school age.
Just play, play, play. Kids need to be active and need time to develop friendships and face-to-face communication skills.
We need to remember ALL children in our community. Too much focus on "our own" everything.
There's been some great developments in the past few years and we have been able to create some good relationships. Providers and organizations are starting to collaborate more and share a common goal instead of just competing with each other.
The importance of social and emotional development in the early years. So fortunate to live in a community that provides so many resources and opportunities for my children that fosters social and emotional development!!
I think our city can do better for our kids
We have a lot of the same thing around here.
Love the variety and quantity of preschools here but feel we may need to inform parents how early registration is
I would embrace volunteering to speak at community awareness gatherings, mentoring new providers and requiring all licensed & licensed exempt providers to register with the county so we can development, wellness and safety stats. Early Childhood Professionals shape the majority of the foundation for the rest of that human's life it is imperative we value this reality.
We just need more for kids - free or low cost, open when we need it, and safe



The Early Learning Alliance Network envisions a community that is empowered with information and resources to engage in and support high quality early learning. This community will exist through transparency, networking, learning, and a commitment to all young children. As a result of our work, all children will become active heroes in their own learning, enabling them to see themselves as competent and valued contributors to our community.