



Ready Start Richland Blueprint

2 out of 3 children ages birth to five in Louisiana have both parents or their single parent in the workforce. Increased access to reliable, quality early care and education is necessary to ensure our economy thrives today & tomorrow.

- Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

[1/30/2023]

Introduction

Ready Start Richland is a community coalition comprised of early care and education programs; Head Start, school system, childcare and family childcare providers that have opted into Academic Approval are committed to creating and implementing a unique vision for early childhood. Driven by the unique needs of the community to improve opportunities and inspire change for children birth to five.

The future of Richland parish is dependent on the success of its children and families, together we have an opportunity to transform the future of our parish in one generation. Access to quality early care and education programs ensure parents keep working or complete higher education and that children are on track to a brighter future.

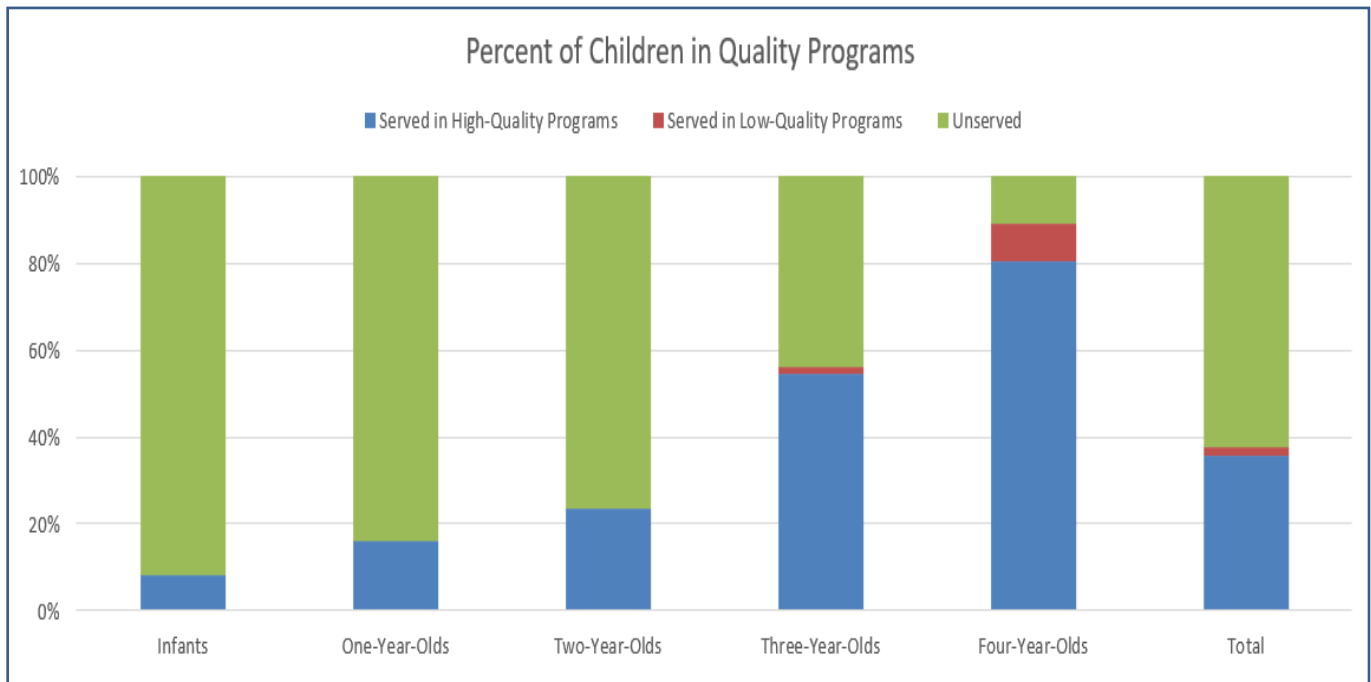
Research on early brain development indicates that 90% of brain development occurs by age four. That means that if we are waiting to provide quality early care and education until age four when most children arrive at preschool, we have missed out on the most critical period of human development.

It's easier and less expensive to provide access to quality early care and education right from the start. Doing so ensures that our youngest learners have brain building experiences that prepare them for school and lifelong success.

-Amy Clancy, Director of Early Childhood Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana

Two out of Three children ages birth to five in Louisiana have both parents or their single parent in the workforce. Richland parish has critical gaps in access to quality early care and education for our communities' youngest learners. In 2020-2021 only 21% of Infants and Toddlers had access to quality early care and education programs. Increased access to reliable, quality early care and education is a necessity to ensure our local economy thrives today and tomorrow.

Access to Quality Early Childhood Richland Parish by Age Group 2021 – 2022



Building a brain is like building a house. It's easier and less expensive if it's done right from the start. Rewiring an old house can be done, but it's going to take longer, it will be more expensive, and it still may not work as well as the wiring of a new house. -Dr. Laura Jana, Early Childhood Comprehensive Services

Guiding Statements

Statement: Enriching children from the ground up.

Purpose: Prepare the current and the future workforce by making quality early care and education accessible to children Birth to 5 and their families, supporting teachers, and increasing knowledge of community members about the value of early childhood.

Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Improve quality of the early care and education opportunities for all early childhood programs in the network, all programs remain proficient or higher on 2021-2022 performance profile. (Goal Met 2020-2021 all site proficient or higher)

Strategies:

- Ready Start Coach for all programs (CLASS, Curriculum, GOLD)
- MMCI coaching for all Pre-K classrooms
- MMCI coaching for all I/T classrooms
- All ECE classrooms with Tier 1 Curricula Curriculum for all classrooms and sites
- Professional development training ((Frog Street Differentiated Instruction, Frog Street Making Center Time Intentional, Frog Street Classroom Strategies)
- Regularly scheduled training is offered to PreK teachers during professional development days during the school calendar.
- Explore possibilities annual bonuses for high performing teachers (high proficient/excellent)
- Teacher wish list

Resources:

Existing

- Ready Start Coach certified MMCI PreK & I/T, PreK and I/T Train the Trainer. Teacher wish list for school PreK classrooms.

Needed

- Explore possibilities (SRTC, funding from donors, businesses) for annual bonuses for high performing teachers (high proficient/excellent)

Performance Metrics: CLASS Scores/Performance Profiles – all programs proficient or higher on 2021-2022 performance profile

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021 All programs have received performance profile ratings of proficient or higher for the year 2020-2021. All sites now have a Tier I curricula.
- 2021-2022: All early childhood sites have received performance profile ratings of proficient or higher for the year 2020-2021.
- 2022-2023: Ready Start Richland program partners received a total of 2 excellent, 6 high proficient, and 4 proficient ratings for the 2021-2022 performance profile. In fall 2022 Richland Parish PreK teachers submitted a teacher wish list. The wish list purchased items for classrooms to support high quality

education. Early Childhood Specialist provided CLASS training to PreK teachers in September 2022. Early Childhood Specialist has scheduled Frog Street trainings for October and November 2022. Early Childhood Specialist provided MMCI Pre-K in Fall 2022. Infant/Toddler MMCI is scheduled for Spring 2023. CLASS Incentive Stipends for high performing child care teachers who score Proficient or higher on Fall and/or Spring CLASS observations in the 22-23 school year. (Proficient Teacher - \$100, High Proficient Teacher - \$200, Excellent Teacher - \$300)

Goal 2: Increase access to early care and education opportunities for Infants and Toddlers, Birth to age three enrollments has increased by 100 children by 2025.

Strategies:

- Evaluate availability of current I/T slots by age and location with monthly child count.
- Identify potential sites to add additional seats.
- Request PDG funding for B-3 seats. Allocated 55 Birth to Three seats for 2022-2023 year.
- Explore EHS funding options if needed.
- Local Fundraising targeting businesses - SRTC funds raised in parish are invested into increasing access to seats for B-3.
- Child Care Recovery Stipend
- Provide supports for eligible CACFP providers transitioning to become licensed Family Child Care Provider.

Resources:

Existing

- Community partnerships
- 6 Type III Child Care Centers, Delta Community Action Agency Head Start, Parish Public PreK classrooms
- Community Supply Building Access and Expansion Coordinator

Needed

- Funding for B to 3 seats. The barrier to serving in-need Infants, Toddlers and Threes in Richland parish is not the availability of spots in childcare centers, but the funding for the spots that already exist.

Performance Metrics: Increased B-3 enrollment by 100 children by 2025

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021: Ready Start Richland was awarded a total of 24 PDG Birth to 3 seats to be placed at two sites that met the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. Those sites are Little Feathers and Tender Touch Nursery II with 21 of 24 seats filled as of January 22, 2021.
- 2021-2022: Ready Start Richland was awarded a total of 70 Birth to 3 seats to be placed at three sites that met the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. One Birth to Three Site was added in 2021-2022 year. Those sites are Little Feathers Childcare and Preschool, Tender Touch Nursery II and Stepping Stones Child Development Center with 36 of 70 seats filled as of November 16, 2021. CSBAE Coordinator launched survey to inquire about child care needs with families and businesses. CSBAE Coordinator worked with Children's First Finance to complete the CSBAE Strategic Plan that outlines the child care needs in Ready Start Richland. Field's Round-Up Early Learning Center transitioned from

being a Family Child Care Provider to a Type III Center. This site opened 3 classrooms which allowed for more access to Infant, Toddler and Threes care.

- 2022-2023: Ready Start Richland was awarded a total of 55 Birth to 3 seats to be placed at three sites that continued to meet the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. Those sites are Little Feathers Childcare and Preschool, Tender Touch Nursery II and Stepping Stones Child Development Center with 42 of 50 seats filled as of November 16th, 2022. Birth to Three Seat allocations have been adjusted to support the higher demand in another parish. CSBAE Coordinator held an informational meeting with eligible CACFP providers to gauge interest in transitioning to become a licensed Family Child Care Center. Child Care Recovery Stipend payments for eligible Type III Child Care Centers to assist with operating costs. The funds will be dispensed one time per quarter.

Goal 3: Increase community demand for quality early care and education for Infants and Toddlers, met when birth to age three enrollment has increased by 100 children by 2025 and we have a waitlist.

Strategies:

- Marketing Campaign - TV ads, Radio ads, Digital Ads, Social media, Posters, flyers, explore other types of media such as digital billboards
- Host a Round-up Kickoff Event for parents in advance of Early Childhood Preschool Round-Up
- Share Child Care Connections Choosing Quality Child Care checklist
- Network folders shared with local sites to share with new families

Resources:

Existing

- Met with marketing team to create marketing plan
- Community Supply Building and Access Expansion Coordinator
- Developmental Screening Initiative Coordinator

Needed

- Marketing Campaign to build awareness of what high quality early childhood is
- Community meetings with local stakeholders to raise awareness of partnerships with The Children's Coalition of Northeast Louisiana & Richland Ready Start Network, early childhood and preschool options available locally and community impact

Performance Metrics: Increased B-3 enrollment by 100 children by 2025, we have an infant and toddler waitlist due to increased demand and need to further expand access

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021: Marketing campaign included TV ads, digital ads, radio PSA's, flyers, postcards, and social media marketing, and newspaper articles to advertise for the Birth to 3 Seats available in the community. The Birth to Three Coordinator attended community events to educate the public about available Birth to Three seats. We have a Ready Start Richland website for both Ready Start Richland and for PDG Birth to 3 seats.
- 2021-2022: Shared early childhood program "spotlights" in the weeks leading up to early childhood roundup. The marketing campaign included TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers,

postcards. Families were surveyed in June 2022 on the experience of Coordinated Enrollment. Results stated that most families were aware of their early childhood options through friends & family or through the director/administrator of a site. Results were mixed because a small number of providers that also participated in the survey.

- 2022-2023: Continued marketing campaign for Early Childhood Guide. Birth to Three flyers were updated in summer of 2022. Marketing materials are being updated to include Family Child Care Providers that have opted into Academic Approval and 2023-2024 Round Up dates. Early childhood program “spotlights” will be shared in the weeks leading up to early childhood roundup. The marketing campaign included TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers, postcards. CSBAE shared early childhood initiatives during a Rayville Kiwanis meeting in October 2022. The Children’s Coalition is partnering with the main branch of the Richland Parish Library in Rayville to host a Literacy and Coordinated Enrollment Community Event in February 7th, 2023. Director of Early Childhood, Ready Start Coordinator and CSBAE Coordinator are working together to build marketing materials around the importance of awareness of early care and education.

Goal 4: Close the access gap for four year olds, enroll 90% of in-need four year olds by 2025.

Strategies:

- Marketing Campaign- Digital Ads, Social media, educational campaign ECE is important to school readiness. What does quality look like? This, not that.
- One sheet to communicate in simple format with visual the vision and primary goals of Ready Start Richland.
- Explore reallocation of existing funding sources such as, Title 1 to increase access for four-year-old seats
- Explore other new funding sources such as increased LA4 for the school system or NSECD for 4 year olds that could be placed in childcare centers or private school.

Resources:

Existing

- Blueprint, trusted messengers, rebranding, social media, Title 1 funds

Needed

- One sheet, Marketing

Performance Metrics: Increase enrollment for four-year-olds to 90% by 2025.

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021: In collaboration with Richland Parish Schools, using LA 4 funding one new Pre-K classroom serving 10 children was added to Delhi Elementary, which previously did not serve four-year-old for the 2020-2021 school year. Prior to COVID-19, Richland Parish Schools intended to use Title 1 funds for the new classroom. However, due to lack of enrollment caused by the pandemic, Richland Parish Schools used 50% LA-4 funds and 50% Title 1 funds to serve more in need four-year-old children at a high need rural area of the parish at Delhi Elementary. Richland parish schools are committed to ensuring they

offer preschool at each of their elementary schools. They requested and awarded new LA4 seats to create a new preschool classroom at Holly Ridge Elementary and for the 2021-2022 school year.

- 2021-2022: school year, one new Pre-K classroom serving 10 children was added to Holly Ridge Elementary, in collaboration with Richland Parish Schools, using LA 4 funding, which previously did not serve four-year-old in the 2020-2021 school year.
- 2022-2023: Richland Parish Schools were allocated 55 seats to be funded through the LA4 program. All 55 seats are fill as of November 16th, 2022. When comparing Children’s First Finance data from 2021-2022 and the 55 publicly funded seats are currently filled, suggests that 59% of 4 year-olds in the Richland Parish were enrolled.

Goal 5: Conduct developmental screenings for every child aged birth to 3 years old enrolled in early childhood programs in the network.

Strategies:

- Conduct developmental screenings – ASQ-3 for Infants and Toddlers upon enrollment in Type 3 childcare centers
- Referral to early intervention (ex. Early Steps, School Systems, private therapists) as needed based on screenings results
- Training on how to conduct ASQ-3
- Training on Early Steps referral process
- Training on Red Flags for developmental delays and how to refer out for intervention services.
- Parent Handout – Developmental milestones map with early intervention resources and contacts, Early Steps, School System with step by steps what to expect overview. Consider including Families Helping Families contact for families who are interested in having an advocate to assist them through the process.
- Ensure all new teachers are trained in ASQ-3 and referral processes.

Resources:

Existing:

- Childcare centers desire to ensure developmental delays are identified as early as possible so that children have increased access to early intervention services. Partnership with Early Steps. Developmental Screening Initiative Coordinator.

Needed:

- Trainings as listed above. Create step by step process for conducting screenings as part on intake and enrollment. Staff that are trained in ASQ-3 Train the Trainer

Performance Metrics: We will know this goal is met when we increase referrals for children aged Birth to Three years old by 10%.

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021: Type 3 childcare centers received a set of the ASQ-3 master copy. The teachers were also provided with training on implementation of the ASQ-3 and the Early Steps Referral process. As of Fall 2020, all Type 3 childcare centers are implementing the ASQ-3 for all children enrolled during the Fall

and Spring semesters and upon enrollment. During the 2020-2021 year, 21 asq-3 screenings were completed.

- 2021-2022: Ready Start Network Coordinator, statewide Pediatric Developmental Health Coordinator, and Child Care Resource & Referral Coach began collaborating to create policies for implementing the ASQ-3 and improve the quality of screenings completed. The timeline anticipated for training and implementing the screenings will be April and May 2022. Training was held in April and May 2022.
- 2022-2023: Developmental Screening Coordinator began in July 2022 to assist in implementing the ASQ-3's and other developmental initiatives.

Goal 6: Community network and programs partners will hold at least 2 family engagements events annually.

Strategies.

- Developmental Play Kits distributed to Richland Parish Library and local doctor's offices.
- Coordinated Enrollment Community Event
- Past Family Engagement Events at Program Partner sites: Graduation activities inside and outside, make & take activities, cookout, open house, Spring Fling, M.A.C.H.O (Men and Children Hanging Out) , M.O.M. (Mom's on a Mission).
- Family Engagement Event Stipend

Resources:

Existing

- Desire to create activities that will engage families throughout the parish.

Needed

- Calendar of community events happening throughout the parish
- Community events to partner with
- Resources to assist in implementing events at program partner sites
- Community partnerships to build little libraries, developmental corners and distribute developmental play kits.

Performance Metrics: We will know this goal is met when community network and program partners hold at least 2 family engagement events annually in Richland parish.

Annual Progress Update:

- 2021-2020: Parent Focus Group held in January 2022. Program partners collaborated to plan the annual Coordinated Enrollment Community Event and participated in a local Christmas parade. Developmental Play Kits distributed to Richland Parish Library and local doctor's offices throughout Spring 2022. Children's Coalition purchased big book kits and backpacks with developmentally appropriate materials for infants and toddlers for all three branches of the Richland Parish Library. The kits and backpacks are available for families to check out and will assist with making developmentally

appropriate materials available for children aged birth to five. Program partners collaborated in June 2022 on potential ways to engage families with different activities or events at their sites.

- 2022-2023: Development play kits continue to be distributed to community partners. The Developmental Screening Initiative Coordinator partnered with Rayville Family Clinic to be designated as a Reach Out & Read site. Family Engagement Event Incentive will assist eligible providers with a stipend for materials purchased for Family Engagement Events.