



**STRENGTHENING
INDIANA FAMILIES**

**MID PROJECT REPORT
2019-2022**



AN INVITATION TO DREAM

In 2019, we embarked on a collaborative journey with the Indiana Department of Child Services and the Indiana Department of Health to prevent child maltreatment by supporting families, building on family strengths and protective factors, reducing risk factors, and engaging community resources and connections. We received a \$2.74 million five-year grant from the U.S. Children's Bureau (Administration for Children and Families, USDHHS) in October 2019 and began engaging state and local partners, including individuals with lived experiences, in this transformative venture. We allowed ourselves to dream of strong and caring communities throughout Indiana where families have equitable access to the resources they need to be connected and safe. Working together with our partners to fulfill this vision and guided by our values and principles, we are implementing four family resource centers in Delaware, Grant, Madison, and Tipton Counties.



Our family resource centers have been open since January 2021 and now serve as a one-stop-shop for families, providing tailored services and supports that respond to the particular needs of each target community. Development of these centers began in early 2020, when we conducted a needs assessment involving the collection of 953 surveys from child welfare workers, and 61 semi-structured interviews and 8 focus groups with families, multidisciplinary professionals and community stakeholders across the four counties. From that work, we identified neglect as the

main driver of foster care entry in our target area. Poverty, lack of support, intergenerational trauma, stress, and other challenges, such as substance misuse and domestic violence were identified as common risk factors. Providing parents support (e.g., concrete supports) and integrated, coordinated services were common recommendations to prevent foster care entry. We used data from the needs assessment to design our services, prioritizing relationship and trust building, connection, equity, cultural responsiveness, and collaboration.

While our centers have core components, every center now looks different because every community we serve has different and evolving needs and resources. Our wonderful community partners in each county support this customization of family supports by collocating their services at the centers. And as we identify new family needs, we work with our partners to strategize new ways of addressing those needs at the center. In this sense, our services are data-informed. We continue to use data and quality improvement processes

to adjust and improve our services such as receiving feedback and input from our Parent Advisory Group, a collaborative of eight caregivers from the communities we serve.

In 2021, we enhanced our [website](#) and social media presence (p. 8) and successfully launched our macro campaign "Kids don't come with instructions. We're here to help!" We understand that all parents and caregivers need help at some point and we hope for them to feel validated and supported, as they become familiar with our centers, services, and resources. Our family resource centers are becoming a family-centered footprint in the community.

We believe that every family has strengths and that all communities have naturally occurring resources. We intentionally build on the existing strengths and resources to promote family resilience. For instance, in our family fun events (e.g., game nights, ice cream parties) families can engage in a fun activity, eat snacks, relax, and enjoy themselves as they strengthen their bonds to one another, and children develop positive childhood memories that they can draw from as they develop resilience in tough times. We are committed to supporting families and fostering their wellbeing, connection, and safety so that every child can fulfill their potential.

What if every child in Indiana had access to a family resource center that could support the development of their full potential as they grow in a safe, loving, and healthy family connected to the resources they need?

Our remarkable family resource center coordinators and team, including Jill Kelly (Firefly Children and Families Alliance), Tashia Weaver, Christina Chandler, Brittany Lakey, Alisha Armes, Megan Wills, Denise Lovelace, our community navigators, and our partners have turned our

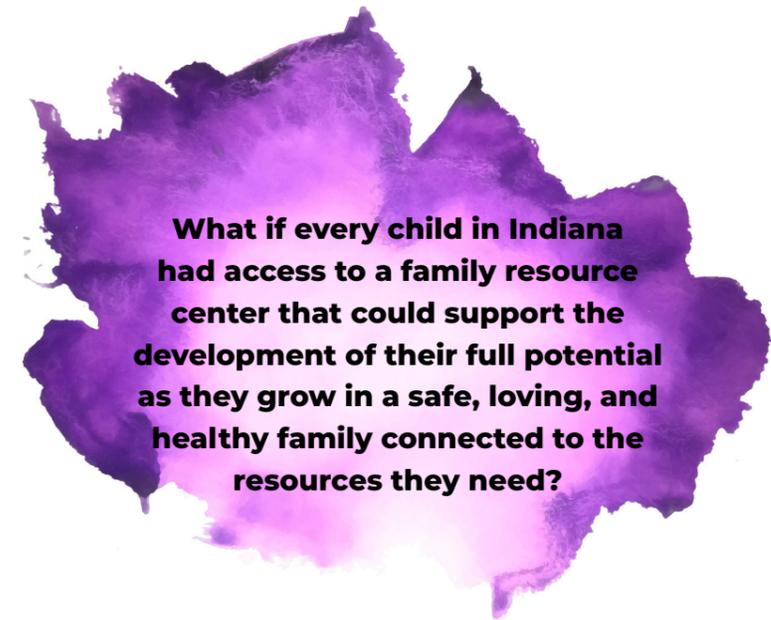
dream into reality. As of April 2022, we have had 5,785 visits and served 651 families. We are confident that we will exceed the projected number of served families by the end of the grant in September 2024.

It is evident that we cannot do this work alone and we are extremely thankful for our outstanding partners, including our Steering Committee, Local Implementation Teams, and Parent Advisory Group (p. 22), our terrific champions, our amazing evaluator, Dr. Bryan Victor, and for the support provided by the U.S. Children's Bureau and our administrative, evaluation, and technical assistance teams (Abt, JBA Associates, A Window Between Worlds, Community Café Collaborative, and Social Current, among others). Strengths-based primary prevention requires everybody's support, including service providers from multiple systems, community leaders, policy makers, researchers, and individuals with lived experiences, among other stakeholders.

We need your help to sustain the promise of family resource centers throughout Indiana and its 92 counties. I invite you to dream with us and work together to make our hopes for Hoosier children and families a reality.

We look forward to working with you!

Susy Mariscal, Ph.D., MSW
Associate Professor, Indiana University School of Social Work
Strengthening Indiana Families Project Director



FUNDING SOURCE

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GRANTEE

Indiana University School of Social Work



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Firefly Children & Family Alliance
(formerly Children’s Bureau)



EVALUATOR

Wayne State University School of Social Work



WAYNE STATE
School of Social Work

MARKETING & CREATIVE LEAD

Awesurance LLC



Awesurance

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H O S T E T L E R
P U B L I C R E L A T I O N S

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October 2019

Strengthening Indiana Families project launches

November 2019

Statewide steering committee convened.

September 2019

U.S. Children's Bureau awards Community Collaborations grant to Indiana University

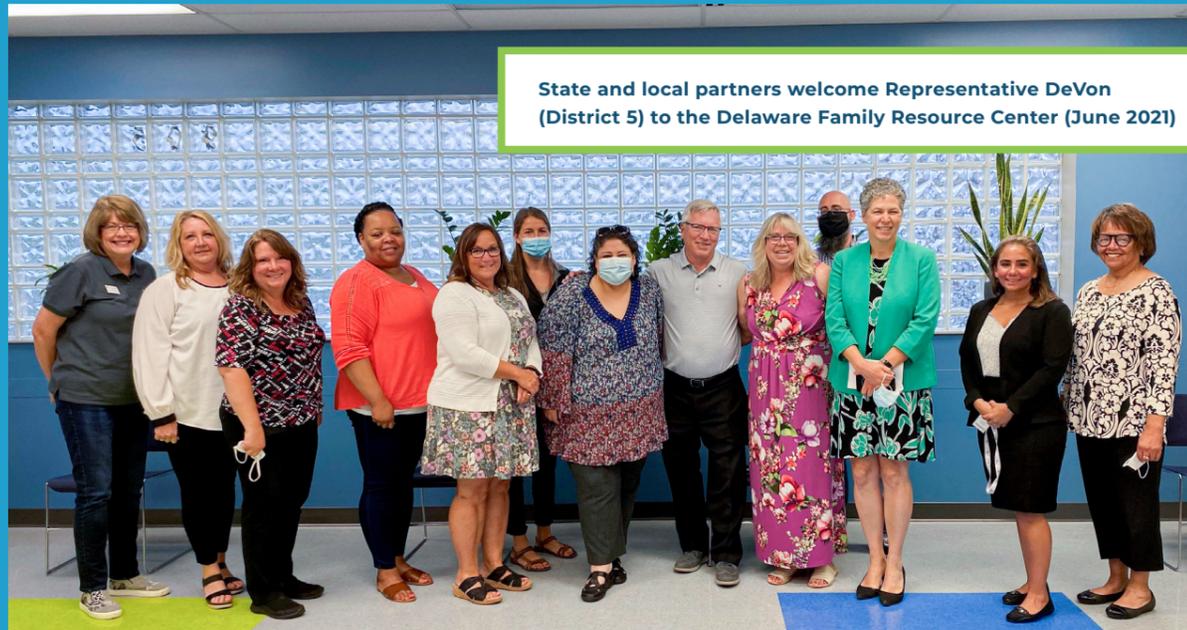
Indiana University School of Social Work receives notice of a 5-year, \$2.7 million federal grant to fund Strengthening Indiana Families.

May 2019

Indiana University School of Social Work (IUSSW) applies for federal funding to launch family resource centers in Indiana.

With the support of the Indiana Department of Child Services and Department of Health, IUSSW faculty write and submit a grant application to the U.S. Children's Bureau

PROJECT TIMELINE



State and local partners welcome Representative DeVon (District 5) to the Delaware Family Resource Center (June 2021)

January 2021

Family resource centers in Delaware and Grant Counties open



April 2021

Family resource center in Tipton County opens



October 2021

Family resource center in Madison County opens



July 2020

Children's Bureau, Inc. and IUSSW begin organizing local implementation teams

August 2020

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Completed.

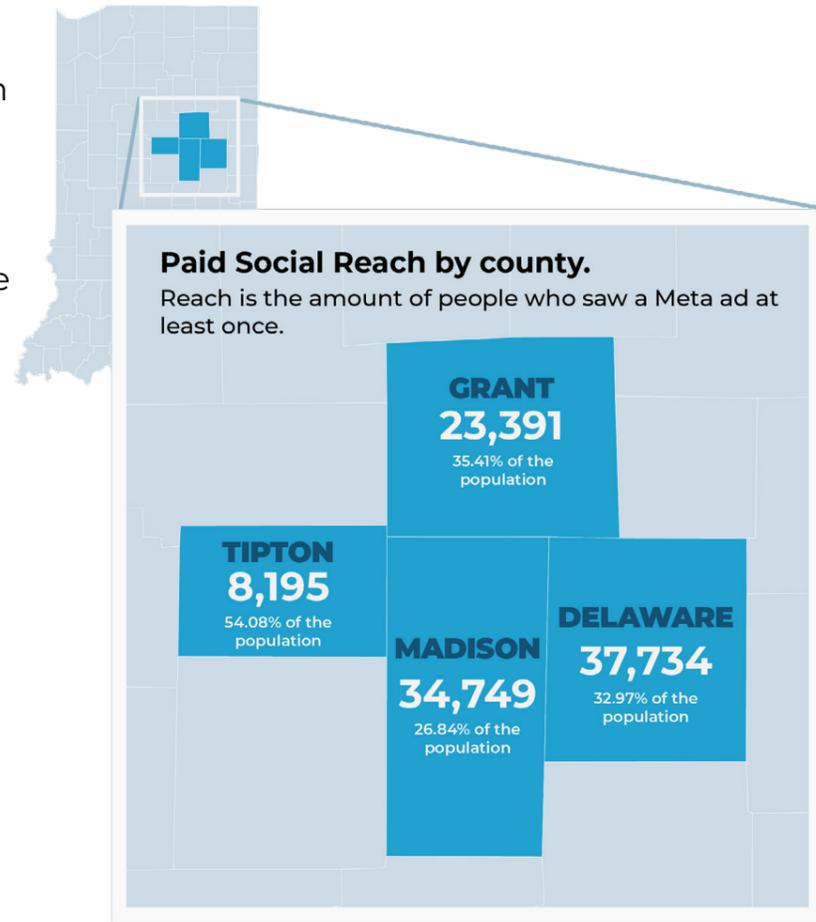
IUSSW led a year-long needs assessment to guide installation and development of the family resource centers

MACRO CAMPAIGN

The Strengthening Indiana Families (SIF) Macro Campaign is a public awareness digital campaign designed to connect families in Grant, Tipton, Madison, and Delaware to the resources provided by the Family Resource Centers.

This campaign was organized around the theme of “Kids Don’t Come with Instructions. We are here to help” in an effort to normalize the need for parenting supports and skills training at various developmental stages. Content for all display and social ads were created in English and Spanish.

The campaign launched on November 1, 2021 and ran on Facebook and Instagram until April 2022. This paid social campaign reached over 100,000 people and over 2,000 people clicked on one of these ads. Display and Search Ads ran on Google ads from January 2022 through April 2022 resulting in over 19,000 interactions* and served over 3 million impressions**.



Five videos providing interviews and overviews of each center were produced, you can find them on the strengtheninginfamilies.org website or the [SIF youtube channel](#).

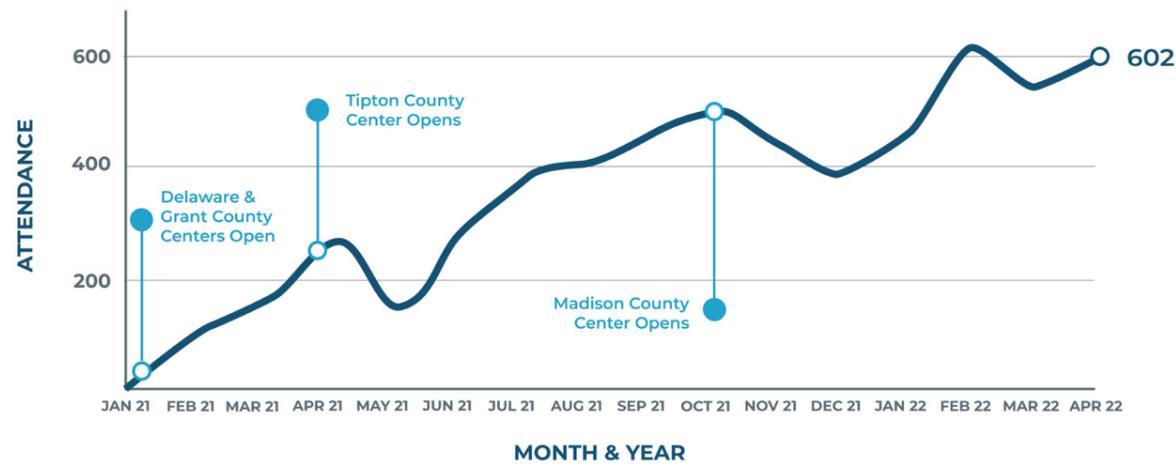
*An interaction is the main action associated with an ad format. These include clicks for ads and views for video ads.

**An impression is counted each time your ad is served.



MONTHLY ATTENDANCE

Since the first family resource centers opened in January 2021, the monthly number of visits to the centers has steadily increased. With some dips due to COVID surges, attendance across the four centers now averages over 500 visits a month.



That means we've got families that keep coming back to the centers, allowing us to build trusting relationships and really connect families to the resources and supports that they need!

UNIQUE NUMBER OF FAMILIES

(CUMULATIVE)

While we connect with many families through our online and in-person outreach, we also complete more comprehensive intakes with families at the centers. This provides an opportunity to build relationships, hear families' stories, and connect them with the resources and supports that they need. Since launching in January 2021, we continue to connect with



new families every month, with 651 families completing intake across the four centers as of April 2022. That's well over halfway to our goal of providing comprehensive supports to 1000 families during the project period!

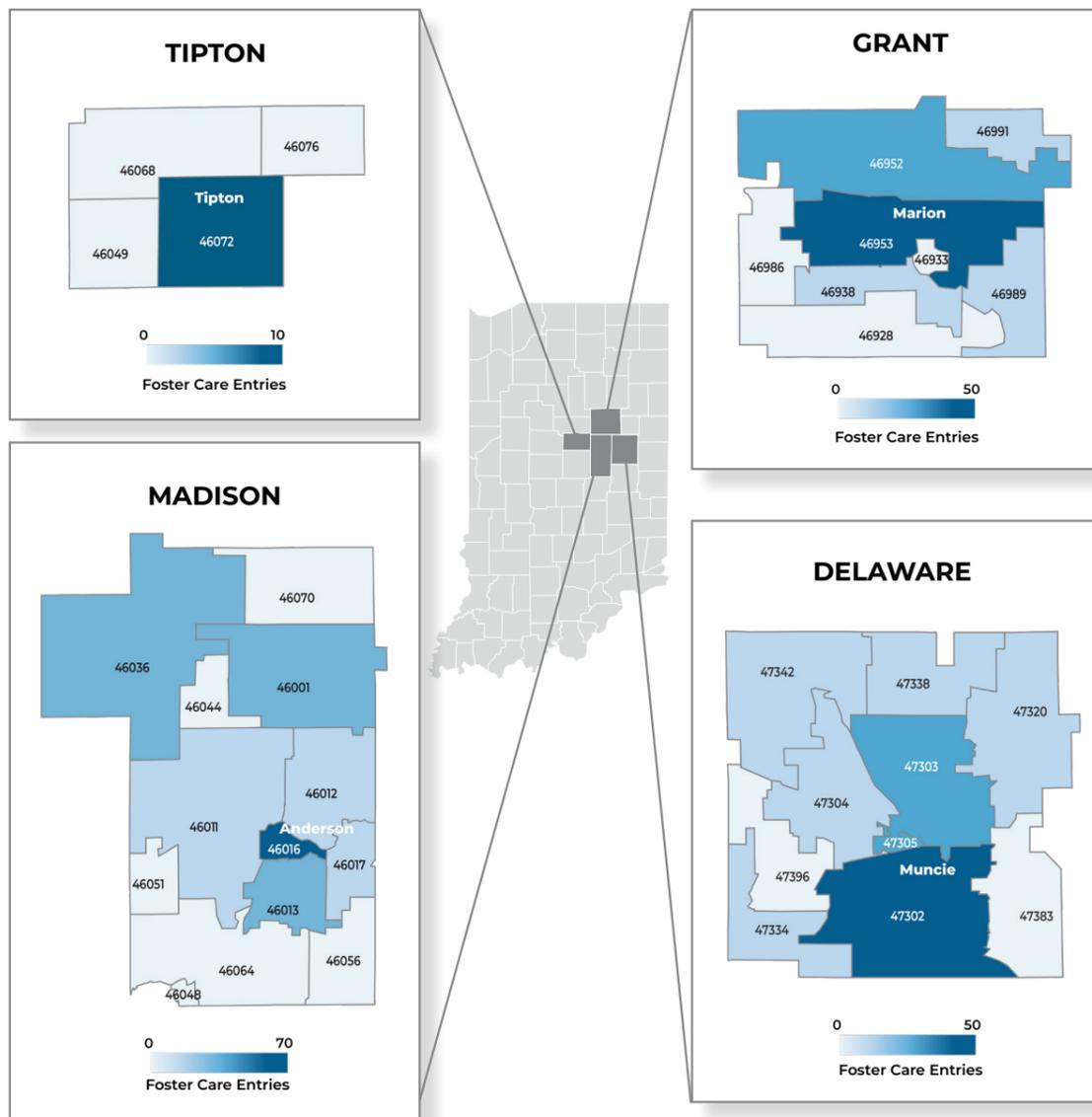
5,785 total visits
as of April 2022

“Normally, I go to the family resource center once a week at least. Sometimes twice a week because of the access to the computers and the free printers, which is really helpful, because if I have to print something off for food stamps or Medicaid or anything like that, I can go there and I can use their computers and the kids can play for a second while I'm able to get this information.”

- Parent

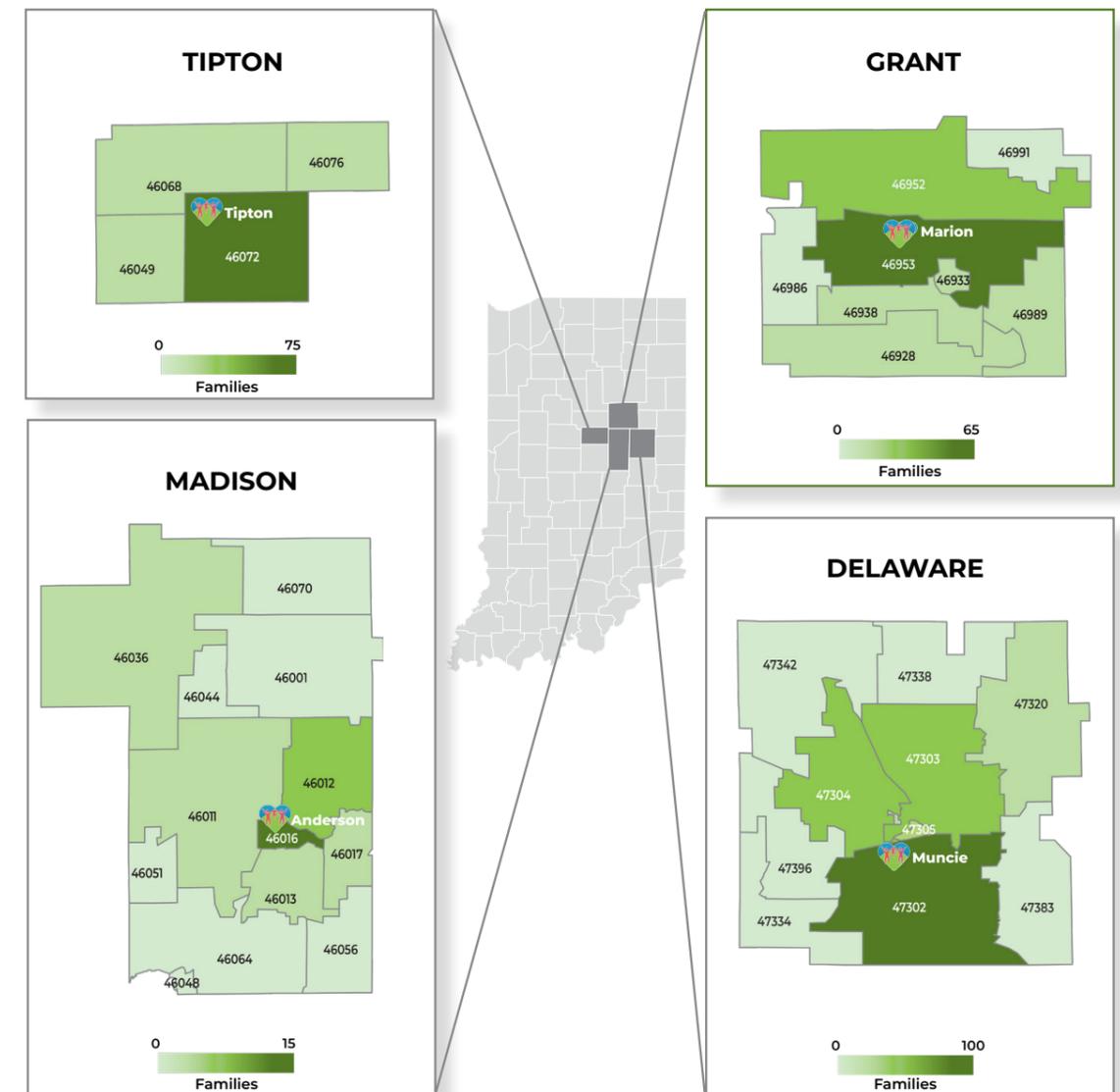
FOSTER CARE ENTRIES

Place matters for the Strengthening Indiana Families project. We selected the location of the family resource centers by looking at the zip codes in each county with the highest number of foster care entries in 2019 (see below). Our hope was that by opening FRCs in these zip codes, we'd be better able to serve families in need of support. After a year of being open, that's just what happened.



CENTER INTAKES

Intake records show that families attending the FRCs are most likely to live in these high-risk zip codes. Intake records also show that **65% of families that attend the FRCs are experiencing food insecurity, and 35% are experiencing utility insecurity** meaning they have had their utilities shut off or recently received a shut off notice.



TOP REFERRAL SOURCES

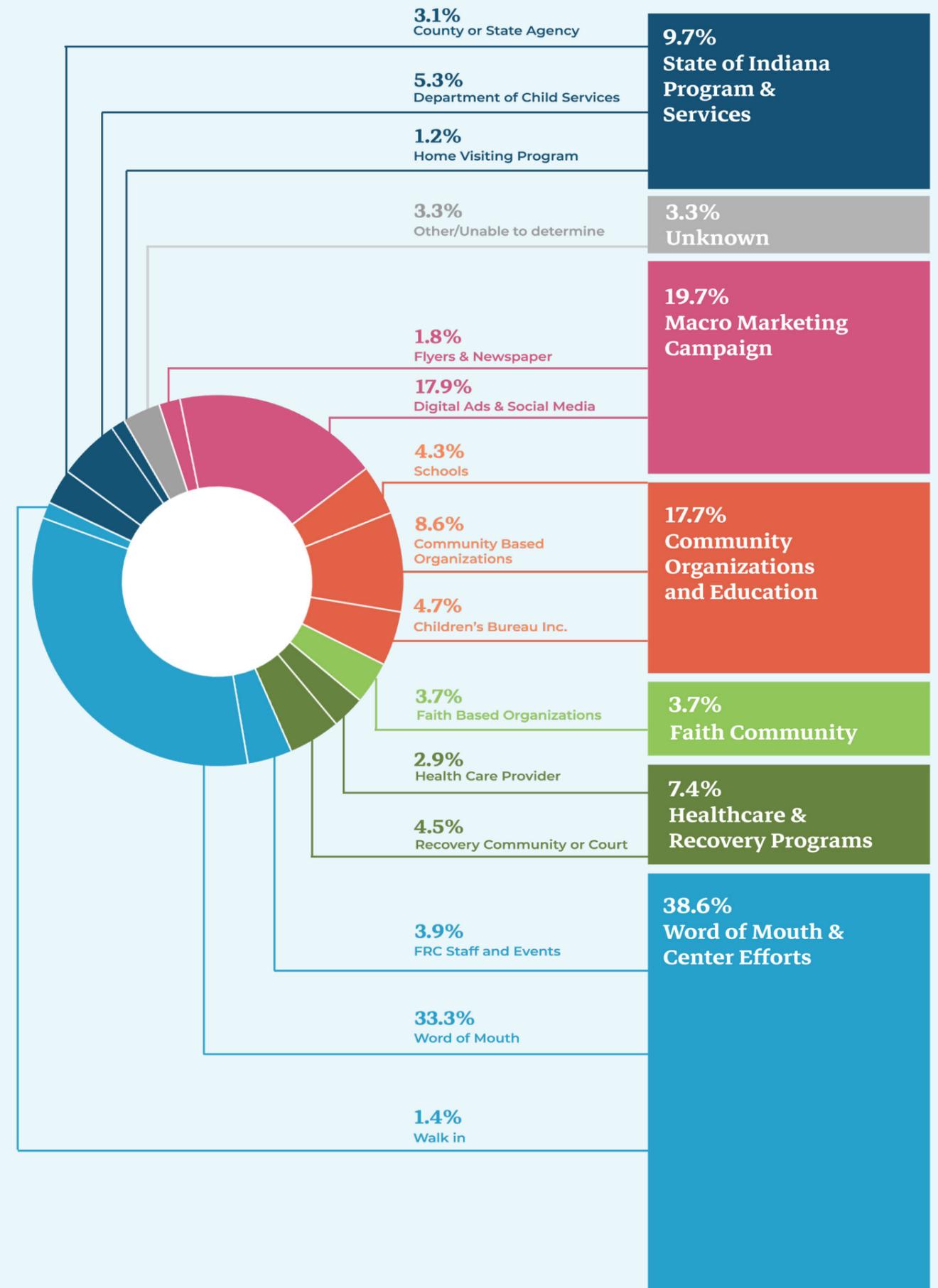
With so many families coming in to see us, we were curious to know how they found out about the centers.

The answer? A whole lot of ways!

The most popular was word of mouth. Community members tell their friends, family, and co-workers to go check out their local FRC. Families also got connected to the resource centers through our social media presence on Facebook, Google, and the website, and referrals from our community partners and their faith communities. Check out the following figure to see all the ways that families got connected to the centers in this first year of operation.

My husband has actually been able to start taking their dad classes, which I think is super cool, because I didn't think I could get him to do anything! And he actually likes the classes. He actually likes to go and be a part of that.

- Parent



TOP 5

CENTER SERVICES

A center service is a program, resource, or service offered at the Family Resource Center.

1 Family Fun Events

Movie nights, arts and crafts, holiday celebrations, cooking lessons and more where center staff can build relationships with families. Sit back, relax, and have fun with your family.



“I run into the problem sometimes where all I do is I go to work, I come home, I’m cleaning, I’m trying to be with the kids, but like, I’m already frustrated from the day, and like - and then I feel like I’m already putting them to bed as I get home. And then, when we go to these family fun events, I can actually sit down, I can relax, I can open up, we can have a conversation about what happened in their day, and how they’re doing”

– Parent



2 Susy's Store & Concrete Supports

Susy's Store is a one-stop-shop for hygiene items and meals. Along with Susy's Store, the SIF Family Resource Centers offer concrete supports such as laundry assistance.



3 Outreach Events

Large events to build awareness of the centers and provide resources to the community such as holiday food giveaways

4 General Resources

Families dropping by the center or calling in to learn about resources in the community and connect with center staff

5 Fun for Kids

Fun activities for children and teens provided by the center staff.



TOP 5

CO-LOCATED SERVICES

Co-located services are services and supports provided by our community partners at the center



Recovery Support

12-step groups, peer recovery coaching.



Health

Nutrition classes, insurance enrollment, health and wellness hour.



Community Partners

Child maltreatment prevention services. Families provided educational and health resources and material supports.



Education

Head Start and preschool enrollment, adult education classes.



Parent Support

Monthly meet-up for parents with infants and toddlers, parenting skills development, dads' group.

HELLO TEAM!

The Family Resource teams are there when you need it. The teams are here for our families. The team goals are to provide a welcoming space to find support, resources, & connections.

DELAWARE COUNTY

905 S Walnut St. Muncie, IN 47302 [f @FRCDelaware](#) 765-729-5845



Tashia

Family Resource Center
Coordinator



Will

Community Navigator



Loryn

Community Navigator

The resource center staff always have a smile on their face! They know me by name and that's really cool. They have watched me grow and encourage me to keep going and I love that!

- Parent

TIPTON COUNTY

3021 W State Rd 28 Tipton, IN 46072  @FRCTipton 765-667-7001



Alisha

Family Resource
Center Coordinator



Dawn

Community Navigator



Melissa

Community Navigator

GRANT COUNTY

1240 S Adams St. Marion IN 46953  @FRCGrant 765-660-2128



Christina

Family Resource Center Coordinator



Mary

Community Navigator

MADISON COUNTY

NEW ADDRESS EFFECTIVE JULY 2022
1102 W 14th St Anderson, IN 46016  @FRCMadison 765-623-1527



Brittany

Family Resource
Center Coordinator



Davida

Community Navigator

PARTNERS

We couldn't do this work without the support from our partners at the state and local levels. We are so grateful to each of the individuals and organizations listed below who have helped make Strengthening Indiana Families possible!

4-H
8Twelve Coalition
A Beautiful People, LLC
A Better Life-Brianna's Hope
A Better Way
A Window Between Worlds
Addictions Coalition of Delaware County
A Voice for Kids, Inc.
Afena Credit Union
Alternatives (City of Tipton)
Alternatives, Inc.
Anderson Community Schools
Anderson First United Methodist Church
Anderson Housing Authority
Anderson Impact Center
Anderson Parks Department
Anderson Preparatory Academy
Anderson Public Library
Anderson University
Anthem, Inc.
Aspire
Autism Society of Indiana
Awesurance, LLC
Ball State University
Blackford Special Education Co-Op
Bowen Center
Boys & Girls Club of Muncie
Boys and Girls Club of Grant County
Boys and Girls Club of Tipton County
Breathe Easy Grant County
BY5 - Early Childhood Development
CareSource
Carey Services
Center Township Trustee
Chances and Services for Youth
Christian Ministries
Child Safety Forward
Circles of Grant County
City of Anderson
City of Marion
City of Muncie
City of Tipton
College Wesleyan Church
Commission on Improving the Status of
Children in Indiana
Community Café Collaborative
Community Foundation of Grant County
Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware
County, Inc.
Community Hospital Anderson
Connections IN Health
CORE Grant County
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Delaware County Prevent Child Abuse Council

Delaware County Department of Veteran Affairs
Delaware County Systems of Care
East Central Indiana CASA, Inc.
Eastern Indiana Works-WorkOne
Elswood Community School Corporation
Excel Center
Family Alliance
Family Service Society
Family Solution Center
Firefly Children and Family Alliance (formerly
Children's Bureau, Inc.)
First Choice for Women
Foster Success
Four County
Future Choices, Inc.
Goodwill
Grant Blackford Mental Health
Grant County Government
Grant County Probation
Grant County Rescue Mission
Grant County Systems of Care
Hands of Hope
Headstart Madison County
Healthy Families
Heart of Indiana United Way
Heartland Church
Hendricks Behavioral Hospital
Hostetler Public Relations
Huffer Memorial Children's Center
I Have a Dream Preschool Academy
Indiana 211
Indiana Coalition against Domestic Violence
Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
Indiana Department of Child Services
Indiana Department of Corrections
Indiana Department of Health
Indiana Division of Mental Health and
Addiction
Indiana Family and Social Services
Administration
Indiana Head Start Collaboration
Indiana Health Center
Indiana Housing & Community Development
Authority
Indiana Legal Services
Indiana Library Federation
Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council
Indiana Public Defender Council
Indiana Supreme Court
Indiana Trafficking Victims Assistance Program
Indiana University School of Social Work
Indiana Wesleyan University
Indiana Youth Institute
Inside Out Muncie



PARTNERS

(CONTINUED)

Intersect
IU Health
IU Health ARTC
Ivy Tech Community College
Jane Pauley Community Health Center
Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition
JobSource
Journey Home
Keystone Family Resource Center
Kids talk
Landmark Recovery
Little Giants Headstart
Living Forward Autism Center
Madison County Community Foundation
Madison County Government
Madison County Health Department
Madison County Mental Health & Addictions Coalition
Madison County Parks Department
Madison County Juvenile Probation
Madison County Prosecutor's Office
Madison County Sheriff's Department
Madison County Systems of Care
Mama Bears Childcare
Marion Community Schools
Marion Early Headstart
Marion General Hospital
Marion Habitat for Humanity
Marion Health
Marion High School
Marion Housing Authority
Marion Police Department
Marion Public Library
Maximus
Mental Health America of Indiana
Meridian Health Services
Migrant Education Program
Migrant Families
Minority Health Coalition of Madison County
Muncie Community Schools
Muncie Habitat for Humanity
Muncie Head Start
Muncie Public Library
Nita Media, LLC
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Normanda Church
Nurse Family Partnership
On My Way Pre-K
Open Door Health Services
Operation Love Ministries
Overdose Lifeline
Parent Advisory Group
Pathstone Corporation
Peer Addictions Support Team - JCDPC
Pendleton Police Department
Prevent Child Abuse - Indiana
Prevent Child Abuse- Mississenewa School
Prevent Child Abuse of Delaware County
Pro-Bono Indiana
Purdue Extension
Real Community Covenant Church
Riley Children's Hospital
Rock Prairie Church
Salvation Army
Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana
Sistas of Royalty Mentoring
The Bowen Center
The Child Care Resource Network
The Community Café Collaborative
The Community Center at AFC
The Excel Center
The Ross Center
The Training Center
The Villages
THRIVE Network
Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County
Tipton Community Foundation
Tipton Community School Corporation
Tipton County Commission
Tipton County Government
Tipton County Health Department
Tipton County Indiana Youth Institute
Tipton County Probation
Tipton County Sherriff's Department
Tipton Systems of Care
Tipton Tri-Central Elementary School
Tipton High School
Tipton Middle School
Tipton Public Library
TORCH Coalition
TRC Head Start
Tri Central School Corporation
Trinity Wesleyan Church
Turning Point - Madison County
Turning Point Systems of Care
United Way of Grant County
United Way of Howard and Tipton Counties
U.S. Children's Bureau
Valle Vista Health System
Veteran's Administration of Northern Indiana
Wayne State University
West Street Christian Church
WorkOne - Madison
YMCA of Madison County
YMCA of Muncie
Youth and families with lived experience in the child welfare system
YWCA Central Indiana

