

# Developing an Early Childhood Mental Health Needs Assessment in a Rural Region

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**COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH  
INITIATIVE**

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# Presenter Disclosures

**Meagan Benetti & Allison Howland**

- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

**No relationships to disclose.**

# Collaborative Research Initiative

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## Vision:

*We partner to build community capacity that empowers families and individuals to optimize their own well being.*

## Mission:

*We strive to enhance the health and well-being of youth and families through collaborative evaluation research of social and mental health services, school-based interventions, and community initiatives.*

# Today's Presentation

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- Indiana Project LAUNCH
- CBPR Approach
- Needs assessment process & results
- How is this useful?

# Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health

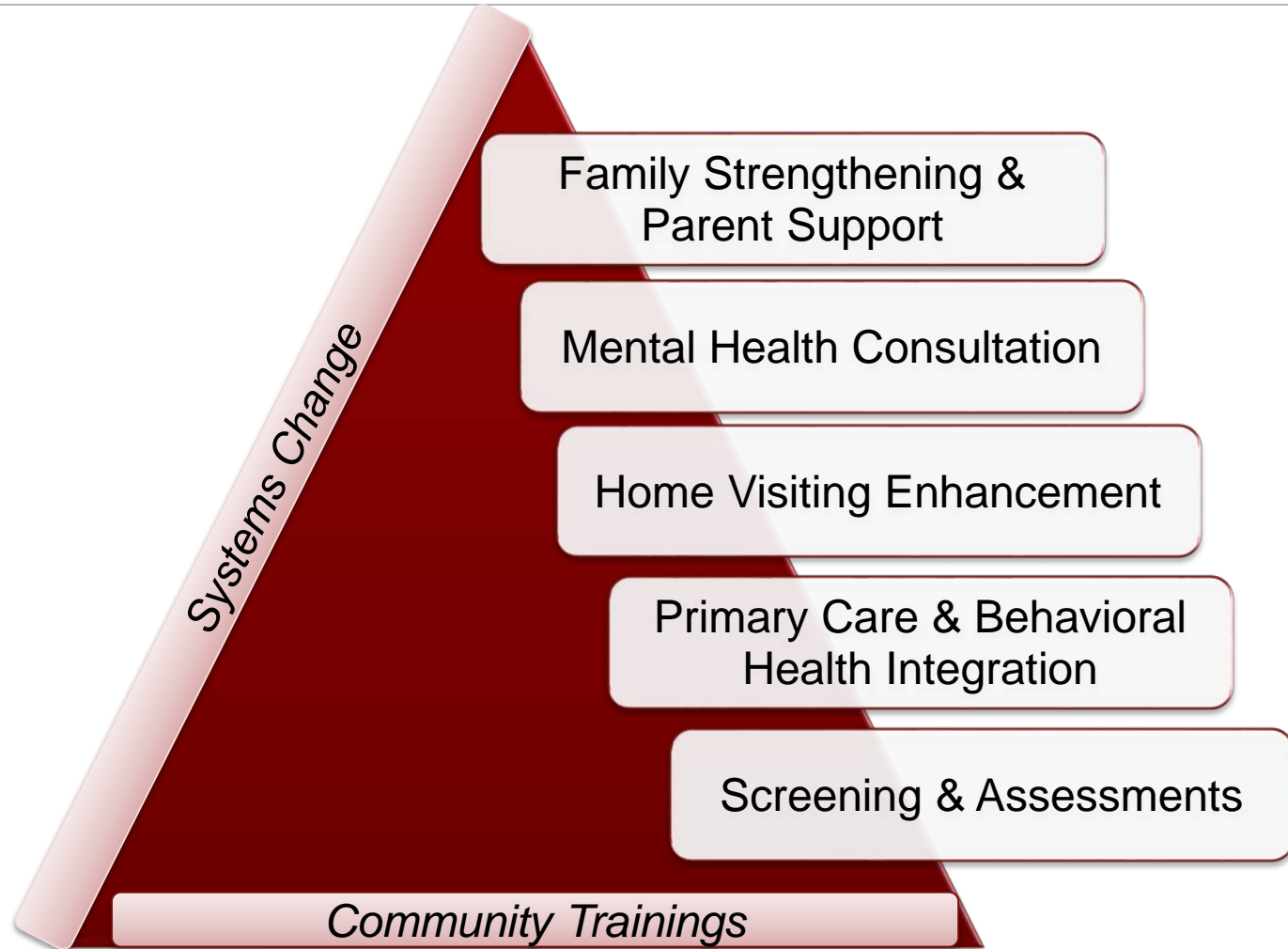
helping children soar



PROJECT  
LAUNCH

*Public health approach to improve the wellbeing of children, birth through age 8, emphasizing **social and emotional health***

# Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health

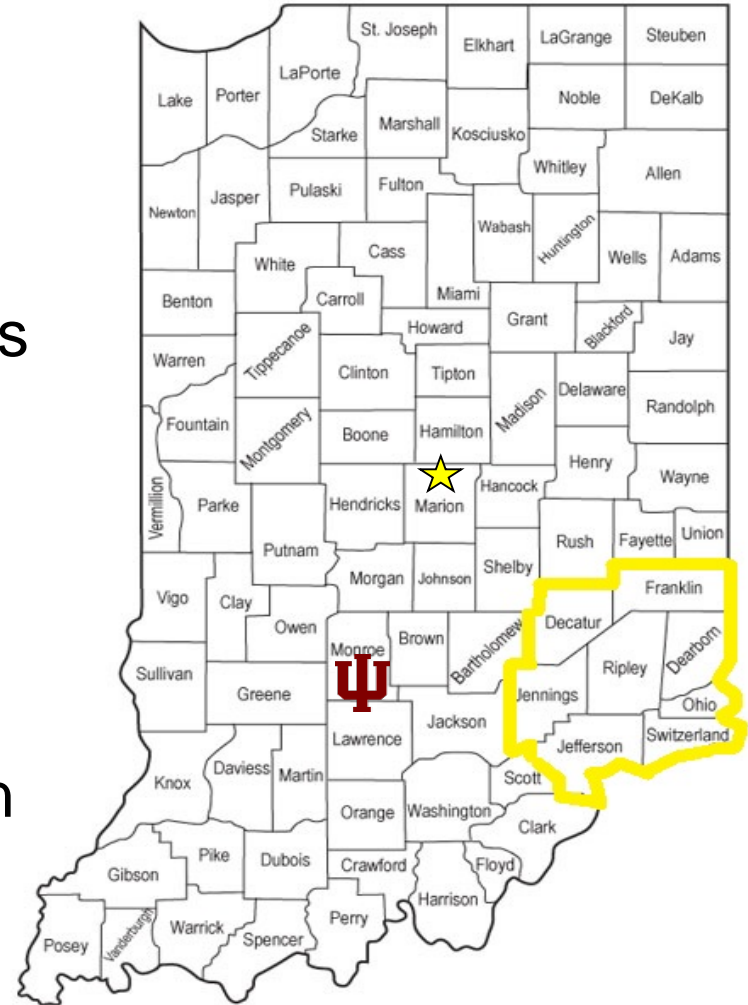


# Indiana LAUNCH Overview

Indiana LAUNCH aims to:

- Implement and enhance services
- Improve practices
- Increase provider capacity

for agencies that serve young children and their families in the Southeastern Indiana target region



# Population of Children Age 0-4

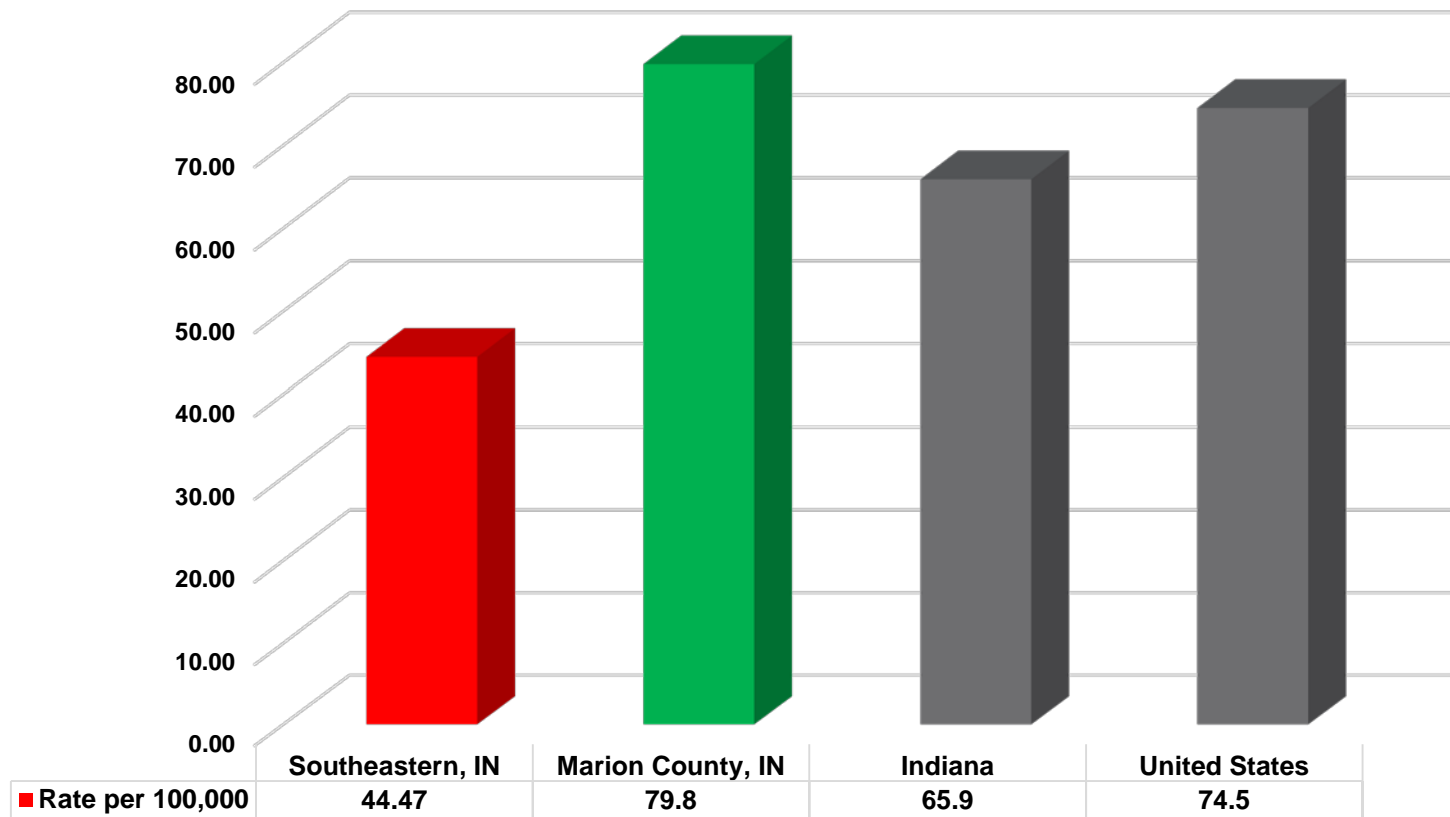
	Population Age 0-4	Adult Population	Percent of Population
Southeastern, Indiana	93,717	1,322,190	7.09%
Marion County, Indiana	68,843	912,242	7.55%
Indiana	427,452	6,514,861	6.56%

*Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2009-13.*



# Indiana Demographics

## Access to Primary Care Physicians



*Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Area Health Resource File. 2012.*

# Community-based Participatory Research

*An orientation to research that focuses on relationships between academic and community partners, with principles of co-learning, mutual benefit, and long-term commitment that incorporates community theories, participation, and practices into the research efforts.*

*(Wallerstein & Duran, 2015)*

# Application of CBPR to Needs Assessment

- Stakeholders involved in
  - Question development for surveys, focus groups, and interviews
  - Administration of focus groups and interviews
- Conducted:
  - **surveys** with families state-wide and in local region; local area service providers
  - **focus groups** with local families
  - **interviews** with local service providers

# Results

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- Families trusted Head Start and primary care providers most
- Families were unsure of where to go with social emotional concerns
- Lack of transportation a barrier to services
- Lack of available resources

# Results

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- Clinical provider turnover was a major concern for clinicians and families
- Providers needed help understanding basic mental health and social emotional issues
- No prevention-based services for families. Most available services were for families in systems (justice, child services, etc.)

# How we used data to inform project goals

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- Implemented Incredible Years<sup>®</sup> program group sessions and home coaching model
- Supported providers with mental health consultation
- Implemented Conscious Discipline<sup>©</sup> in Head Start classrooms
- Supported mental health in primary care settings
- Implemented screening tools in childcare settings

# How can you use this process?

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Genuine Partnerships and Trust develop through:

- Co-learning
- Capacity-building
- Findings and knowledge that benefit ALL partners
- Long-term commitments to communities

# What does this process produce?

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Genuine Partnerships and Trust result in:

- Increased access to information
- Quality of information gathered
- Creative problem solving
- Receptivity to findings
- Meaningful use of evaluation results