

Our Children's Success is Everybody's Business

A 40-year longitudinal study that followed infants into adulthood showed that investing \$1 in early childhood saves \$17 down the road, with tangible results measured in lower crime, fewer single parents, and higher individual earning and education levels¹.

Our Babies Can't Wait will help **increase**:

- ▶ Success in school
- ▶ Graduation rates
- ▶ Workforce readiness
- ▶ Job productivity
- ▶ Community engagement

. . . and help **decrease**:

- ▶ Crime rates
- ▶ Teenage pregnancy
- ▶ Welfare dependency
- ▶ Job training costs
- ▶ Special education costs
- ▶ Grade repetition

¹Many Happy Returns,
L. Schweinhart. The
High/Scope Perry
Preschool Study Through
Age 40, Dec. 2004



Community Solutions

Community Solutions embraces the big picture in health and human services for the purpose of bringing about improved community conditions and people's lives in Benton and Franklin Counties. Community leaders identified four priority areas of focus: education, health, safety, and self-sufficiency.

Our Babies Can't Wait is the first Community Solutions initiative addressing all four focus areas.

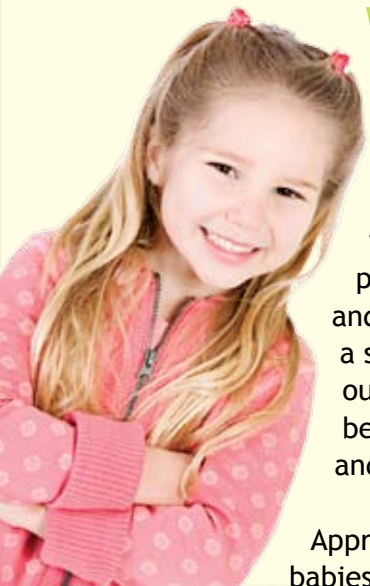


For more information visit
www.communitysolutions-bfco.com
or call 2-1-1

Facilitated by United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties

Our Community's Future Starts With Our Babies





Everyone Has a Part to Play

Our Babies Can't Wait is a region-wide effort that helps parents, caregivers, and the community build a sound foundation for our children so they will be successful in school and in life.

Approximately 3,900 babies are born in Benton and Franklin Counties every year. There is an abundance of scientific evidence that show children's emotional, social, and cognitive development begins the moment they enter the world. A child's day-to-day experiences affect the development of his or her brain, including intelligence and personality.

Children thrive best in loving, nurturing relationships and through everyday experiences.

People in our community can increase their knowledge and understanding of the vital importance of our children's early years. The community, as a whole, can provide the necessary support and assistance to help our children get a good start.

How to Get Involved

By making a positive difference in a child's life, you are making our community a better place for all of us. Here is what you can do:

... Inform

- ▶ Post Our Babies Can't Wait banner on organizational websites
- ▶ Run loops of TV spots in waiting areas, retail stores and other places where parents/caregivers spend their time
- ▶ Include information about early learning in newspapers and newsletters
- ▶ Present information to community groups and rally their support
- ▶ Connect parents and caregivers to educational materials and other resources

... Educate

- ▶ Help produce educational materials (i.e. child development pamphlets, parenting tips)
- ▶ Display posters in doctors' waiting rooms, dry cleaners, childcare centers, grocery stores, libraries, etc.
- ▶ Distribute informational materials to customers and employees (i.e. utility bills, paychecks)
- ▶ Provide educational tools for parents and caregivers (i.e. books, CDs, toys)
- ▶ Sponsor skills development workshops for parents and caregivers

... Act

- ▶ Volunteer to help with a parent education group
- ▶ Host parent/caregiver training in neighborhoods with high teen pregnancy rates or gang activities
- ▶ Influence civic, faith-based or ethnic groups to be advocates for children
- ▶ Develop monthly support networks for parents and caregivers
- ▶ Influence governmental and funding organizations to enact new policies and allocate resources to support parent and caregiver education and support

Together, our community can accomplish what no individual or family can alone. We can help raise the next generation of successful 20 year-olds.

