What We Do

Children’s Institute bridges gaps and brings new opportunities based in research to support the social-emotional development and holistic wellbeing of infants, children, and youth. We work on behalf of the complete wellbeing of children, partnering with their families, schools, human services, health providers, and government agencies. We help caring adults rise to challenges in children’s growth as these emerge in a context of rapid changes in community life, structural inequities, local, national and global stressors, and a continuing COVID-19 crisis.

Caring for Each Other Matters

Now, more than ever, we are called to model the world we seek to live in, putting health, safety, and all the areas of wellbeing of children and families at the forefront. Before the pandemic, about 1 in 5 young children exhibited school behaviors that inhibit learning – a rate now increasing. Adults who care for children are also experiencing higher levels of stress and burn out, and as children’s demands increase, their need for resources, self-care and supportive routines is paramount. We need to care for each other.

Key to Growth - Knowledge / Skills / Relationships

Together, we lean in to what we know – time-tested practices informed by scholarship, research and data-driven processes and adapted culturally - sharing skills and building strong relationships to be resilient in this moment. We help children and adults innovate to move forward with confidence and achieve goals for children’s development - through proven, preventive strategies and centered on social and emotionally-responsive approaches that raise wellbeing both individually and collectively. A moment of challenge can become a moment of growth, and Children’s Institute unpacks pathways that provide early steps for children’s overall success.
RECENT INITIATIVES AT CHILDREN’S INSTITUTE

PRIMARY PROJECT
Adaptations to maintain the quality of this unique program during COVID, include guidelines for virtual programs, a focus on relationships, and training using a Learning Management System (LMS) and modular videos.

RAPP
The Rochester Area Parent Program has implemented the EzParent online learning system from our partners - the Chicago Parent Program - to foster virtual parent learning groups, serving over 80 parents as of August 2021.

CARING CONNECTIONS
Creating equity in digital access to learning and pre-K family supports in Rochester in response to challenges caused by the pandemic.

GET READY TO GROW
Our GROW bus for developmental screenings for ages 12 months to 60 months is now in action in our community! GROW checks are also available virtually. We are strengthening integration with pediatric practice workflows, enhancing parent linkage as we launch our new Parent Portal in partnership with COMET Informatics, and scaling to new geographies.

RACISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
Children’s Institute’s strategic direction is anti-racist. Our Racism and Social Justice webpage has resources on how to talk about racism with children, racism as a public health crisis and anti-racism as a core component of social and emotional learning.

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN (BSC)
Supporting family and early childhood education staff wellbeing and stress reduction, improved classroom social-emotional climate and teacher-child relationships, decreased children’s behavior problems, and improved social-emotional competence of children and reduced behavioral concerns.

WHOLE CHILD CONNECTION
The Whole Child Connection incorporated explicit content and activities related to exploring SEL within the context of equity and anti-racism. Also the team hosts virtual convenings of youth leaders and adults who support them, focused on the transformative power of genuine relationships.

PROJECT LAUNCH
A community collaboration, including a Young Child Wellness Council of family members, providing effective and innovative early childhood mental health practices and services across community settings to prepare children to thrive in school and beyond.