



**The Illinois *Early Development Instrument (EDI)* Pilot Study
Understanding Young Children's Well-Being in Your Community
PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION LETTER**

November 19, 2019

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Please read the following letter carefully. Kankakee School District 111 in partnership with the Success by 6 Coalition of Kankakee and Iroquois counties and the Erikson Institute graduate school of child development, is participating in the *Early Development Instrument* Project to collect information about children's development in our community. This information will be used by the school district and the Collaboration for Early Childhood to improve services for young children and their families in our community.

Project Background and Purpose: Research has shown that children who are ready for school from the day they start kindergarten have a better chance to do well in each grade and finish high school. Being ready for school is more than knowing the "A,B,Cs" and "1,2,3s", it also involves social and emotional maturity, good physical health and more. The *Early Development Instrument* (also called the EDI) is a questionnaire developed to help learn more about how young children in a community are developing. Kankakee school district 111, Success by 6 Coalition of Kankakee and Iroquois counties, and the Erikson Institute are starting a study using the EDI in our community. The results from this study will help your child's school, school district, and community better understand what needs to be done in our community to make sure that all children are ready for school.

My Child's Participation: If you agree, your child's kindergarten teacher will complete the EDI questionnaire about your child's development. There is no questioning of or direct involvement of the children. The teachers will be trained to complete the questionnaire. If you have any questions about the EDI you may visit the Erikson Institute website: <https://edi.erikson.edu> or contact Jaclyn Vasquez, associate director of the EDI project at Erikson Institute: jvasquez@erikson.edu; edi@erikson.edu

What will take place? In January your child's teacher will fill out an EDI questionnaire for each child in her/his class to describe five key areas of development: 1) physical health and well-being; 2) social competence; 3) emotional maturity; 4) language and cognitive development; and 5) general knowledge and communication skills. Information from the EDI will be sent to researchers at the Erikson Institute who will analyze the results. Erikson Institute will share the information with the school district and with the publisher of the EDI at McMaster University in order to compare EDI results on groups of children in the U.S. to other countries.

Confidentiality: Kankakee school district 111 will also provide Erikson Institute with your child's name, gender, date of birth, race/ethnicity, Limited English Proficiency status, participation in special education, eligibility for the federal Free and Reduced Lunch program, home address, zip code, and Student Identification Number, which will only be used to assist with approved research or program evaluation, such as linking EDI data to scores from later standardized tests to help Kankakee School District 111 and researchers understand the factors that affect children's success in school over time. Children's names are only used when teachers are filling out the EDI and are not included in the EDI data. Home addresses are only used to link EDI data to a specific neighborhood and will be deleted once that task has been accomplished. Personally identifiable information such as student identification numbers, dates of birth, and zip codes are needed for data matching and analysis.

All EDI data are stored at Erikson Institute. Erikson Institute ensures that all their practices and policies meet or exceed the criteria for the protection of privacy and the safeguarding of confidentiality as laid out in federal privacy regulations. Your child's school does not keep a copy of the questionnaire and no information is added to your child's school record. Because the results of the study are reported at the group-level only, your child's own specific questionnaire information will never be made public in any way.

Are there any risks to you or your child? We can identify no risks involved with this study. Your child's name is NOT tied to the EDI data, nor will EDI results be used to identify or evaluate any individual child. Rather, EDI results will only be used to report on groups of children (school, school district, neighborhood, and community) for the purposes of improving community conditions. For instance, results may describe children's developmental strengths and needs within a neighborhood or a school. All data collected for this research study will be kept in a secure, encrypted electronic database and will only be available to authorized researchers.

Are there any benefits? Although there will be no direct benefit to your child, this research may answer questions about why children in some areas are doing better or worse than others in terms of their early development. In addition to receiving reports, the school district and communities will benefit from the research in a number of ways. For example, the research could show where there are large neighborhood differences in the number of children who are healthy and ready for school. The information from this project can help schools, program planners, and community members become more aware of ways to create environments to help children in their community thrive.

Do I have to agree to this? No. Your decision whether or not to participate is completely voluntary and will not adversely affect your relationship with your child's teacher or school. Even if you agree now, you can change your mind at any time. If you do not want your child included, please fill out the information at the bottom of the page and return this letter to your child's teacher.

Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns about the EDI project? If you have any questions or concerns about this research project at any time, please feel free to contact the study's principal investigator Tonya Bibbs, Ph.D., an assistant professor at the Erikson Institute (Tbibbs@erikson.edu) or Amanda Moreno, Ph.D., Chair of the Erikson Institute's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (AMoreno@erikson.edu).

- **I do not want my child/children included in this study.**

My Name:

**My Child or Children's
Names:**

School Name:
