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Early Childhood Investment Corp. names new Great Start Child Care and Early Learning Regional Resource Centers

LANSING, Mich. – In an effort to maximize increasingly scarce dollars for early childhood programs, Michigan’s Early Childhood Investment Corporation has awarded 10 new “child care quality improvement” contracts to organizations throughout Michigan.

Those organizations will operate as Great Start Child Care and Early Learning Regional Resource Centers that will help streamline the delivery of supports and services for child care providers and families who access child care, according to Judy Samelson, CEO of ECIC, a public non-profit created in 2005 by the state Legislature to build Michigan’s early childhood system.

“With the economy worsening and the state Senate proposing that Michigan cut hundreds of millions of dollars from early childhood programs for fiscal year 2010, squeezing the most out of every dollar is vital.”

To determine contract winners, ECIC conducted focus groups and surveys with parents, child care providers and training service providers across the state to find out how they thought the child quality contract system could be improved.

Their recommendations indicated a need for:

- 1) More local, regional and community input in the planning and delivery of supports and services.
- 2) More accountability in order to improve child care quality.
- 3) Increased recognition of the fact that the majority of children receiving subsidies are cared for by an under-served segment – unregulated child care providers.
- 4) Maximizing precious resources and minimizing duplication of effort.

In determining the make-up of the new service regions, ECIC staff took into account Michigan’s geography, population densities, the number of children living in poverty in various areas, the number of families receiving subsidies, and the number of child care.

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The following organizations were designated as the Great Start Child Care and Early Learning Regional Resource Centers:

Region	Organization
Wayne County	United Way for Southeastern Michigan
Oakland/Macomb	United Way for Southeastern Michigan
Eastern Region	Saginaw County - MSUE
Western Region	Pathways, MI
Southwest Region	Child Care Resources - Southwest Michigan 4C
Central Region	Midland County ESA
Southeast Region	Child Care Network
Northeast Region	Child and Family Services of NE Michigan
Northwest Region	Northwest Michigan 4C Council
Upper Peninsula Region	4C of the Upper Peninsula

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