



A System for All Children:

An Early Childhood Education Needs Assessment in Grand Rapids



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they serve.

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ABOUT IFF

A System for All Children: An Early Childhood Education Needs Assessment in Grand Rapids was conducted by the IFF Research and Evaluation Department with financial support provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

IFF is a nonprofit corporation whose mission is to transform low-income and disinvested communities in the Midwest using the tools of community development finance and expertise, bolstered by data and place-based Research. IFF brings capital from many sources, undertakes real estate investment and development, and forms partnerships with local leaders. Using these resources, IFF works to improve decision-making and resource allocation for facilities-intensive programs including community health, affordable housing, and early childhood education.

In the field of early childhood education, IFF has conducted over a dozen needs assessments and, in many cases, has helped to implement the new priorities that have emerged from these studies. In 1992, IFF and the state of Illinois launched the Child Care Facilities Development Program. As part of the program, IFF documented the need for services and designed, financed, built, and owned seven new facilities for twelve years on behalf of early childhood education providers. In 2000, IFF launched the Chicago Children's Capital Fund with the City of Chicago, resulting in fourteen major expansions of early childhood education centers.

These projects established IFF as an expert in the operations, business models, and design of state-of-the-art facilities. The early childhood education buildings served as family resource centers that strengthened community identity. These special programs, along with IFF's 30 years of consulting, development, and lending have resulted in

the creation of approximately 10,000 new slots and 1.5 million square feet of new or renovated space for early childhood education, which serve and support low-income families.

IFF established a physical presence in Michigan in 2014 and has operations and programs across the state, distributing more than \$57 million in capital to diverse nonprofits and leading numerous nonprofit real estate projects. IFF completed an early childhood education needs assessment for the City of Detroit and the Tri-County area in 2015, fostering a data-informed approach to tackling key questions. Since the reports' release, IFF has led a number of key initiatives in Michigan's early education space, including preservation or creation of over 500 slots, improvement of twenty-three facilities, and support for the development of a comprehensive ten-year plan for the early childhood education system in Detroit.

IFF's early childhood education research methodology is distinct in its spatial analysis of available slots at a neighborhood level. This place based approach helps stakeholders focus investments where they will reach the greatest number of underserved children. IFF's publications include the history of federal and state legislation and programs for low-income children; the economic impact of the early childhood education industry; and statewide, regional, and community needs assessments. Where IFF has conducted similar research, the data and analysis have informed decisions, such as comprehensive planning for the early childhood education system, investment in facilities modernization, appropriate program location, and targeted communication to particular neighborhoods or populations regarding early childhood education options.

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BRIEF METHODOLOGY

A System for All Children: An Early Childhood Education Needs Assessment in Grand Rapids examines the early childhood education (also referred to as ECE) landscape across Grand Rapids, Michigan. To assist in understanding this report, its terminology, and its Mapping models, a brief discussion of the methodology is presented here. A more detailed description of the methodology can be found in the appendix.

This report locates the programs and neighborhoods with the greatest need for ECE services. Need is determined by comparing the **Supply**, which is the capacity of licensed and registered early childhood education providers, against **Demand**, which is the number of young children (from birth to 5-years-old) living in Grand Rapids who are eligible for that program likely to access care in the formal ECE system. Supply is measured with the understanding that city boundaries are porous and families are likely to use nearby, qualified providers. This methodology accounts for families within Grand Rapids traveling outside the city to access care and families outside of Grand Rapids traveling within the city to access care.

Throughout *A System for All Children*, overall supply and demand are discussed for children from birth to 5-years-old and by age group, birth to two and three to five. This conforms to norms of discussion of early childhood and parallels access to various ECE programs. The difference between supply and demand, the **Service Gap**, is calculated for Grand Rapids overall, each program, and each study area (hereafter called **Neighborhoods**). The report also discusses the **Service Level**, the supply divided by the demand, indicating the percentage of children who have access to early childhood education services.

The study examines the service gap for various categories of ECE, both overall in Grand Rapids and within each neighborhood. The program types are: early childhood education services for families of all incomes, referred to throughout the report as market rate care; ECE services for subsidy-eligible families, based on income and a parent's work or school requirements; ECE services for families eligible for Head Start and Early Head Start, a comprehensive child development program funded by the federal government that promotes school readiness for children in low-income families; and ECE services for families eligible for the Great Start Readiness Program, Michigan's state-funded school readiness program for 4-year-olds who are at risk for low educational attainment.

For each program type, *A System for All Children* counts the number of slots administered by providers participating in each program and serving each neighborhood and subtracts the number of young children in each neighborhood who are eligible for each particular program. The resulting amount is the programmatic service gap.

The twenty neighborhoods assessed in *A System for All Children* were created using the Grand Rapids city neighborhood list, grouping areas into similar population sizes, and with approval from local community members in the advisory committee. The neighborhoods with the greatest need, or service gap, are identified. The neighborhoods are then ranked by the size of their service gap, or the number of children and families without access to the care they need. A neighborhood profile is presented for each of the seven highest ranked neighborhoods (the **Highest-Need Neighborhoods**) to help with the development of a comprehensive and practical plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A System for All Children: An Early Childhood Education Needs Assessment in Grand Rapids examines access to quality early childhood education programs in the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Stakeholders can use the information presented to create a comprehensive, high-quality, equitable strategy for the community. This report highlights the programs and neighborhoods with the largest gaps of services in order for investments and improvements to reach the greatest number of children.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

In 2016, Grand Rapids had approximately 17,000 children from birth to 5-years-old. Of those, 11,704 children were likely to place a demand on the early childhood education (ECE) system, yet only 7,655 children had access to licensed and registered ECE slots. Grand Rapids needs 4,049 additional licensed and registered provider slots to meet the needs of all children.

When examining the overall level of service, children from birth to 2-years-old accounted for 100 percent of the total service gap. Citywide 3- to 5-year-olds had a suitable slots, however, services were not distributed uniformly across neighborhoods and programs.

Market rate care for children ages three to five met Grand Rapids' need. Michigan's Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) for pre-kindergarten education has been a success throughout the state and provided enough slots for 80 percent of eligible 4-year-olds.

The greatest gaps of service were among the most vulnerable families. Low-income children eligible for

state and federally funded programs, besides GSRP, and neighborhoods with high levels of poverty only had minimal access to slots in Grand Rapids.

In 2016, the service level for subsidized care for birth to 2-year-olds was 21 percent, subsidized care for 3- to 5-year-olds was 16 percent, Head Start had a 29 percent service level, and services for Early Head Start were nonexistent. Across these subsidy programs, the slots available only met the needs of one-seventh of eligible children.

The recommendations proposed in *A System for All Children* focus stakeholders on the needs of low-income, underserved children to create an improved and equitable early childhood education system in Grand Rapids.

Increase the services available for children from birth to 2-year-olds through Early Head Start and other infant and toddler options. Children ages birth to two have inadequate early childhood education services across all programs. Citywide over 84 percent of infants and toddlers were without ECE services.

All programs need greater availability of care, but the absence of Early Head Start services should be a priority. Stakeholders recognized this need and in 2017, 88 Early Head Start slots were opened through the Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative. Infants and toddlers should be a substantial focus for stakeholders. Even market rate care and subsidized care, which had the highest service levels, did not meet the needs of one-fifth of children.

Focus investments for expanded supply in the highest-need neighborhoods. The unequal distribution of services is apparent through the spatial assessment of

the early childhood education system in Grand Rapids. Based on the service gaps in each study area, over two-thirds of the need was concentrated in one-third of the neighborhoods.

1. West Garfield Park
2. Black Hills-Grandville
3. West Grand (East)
4. West Grand (West)
5. Baxter and Ottawa Hills
6. East Garfield Park
7. Southeast Community

These seven neighborhoods had the greatest number of children in need of ECE services in Grand Rapids should be a focus for stakeholders. Five of these seven neighborhoods had the largest populations of children who would qualify for state and federally funded services. Investments in these neighborhoods would reach the greatest number of children with the most need.

Create a comprehensive plan for early childhood education programs based on the needs of families within each neighborhood. Cultural competency is key to building relationships with families, as well as offering high-quality and appropriate programs to diverse communities throughout the city. The neighborhood profiles in this report aim to illuminate the specific needs of different areas.

Stakeholders should consider parental factors as early childhood education is important for the entire family. Almost 70 percent of Grand Rapids households require access to full-day, full-year care. About half of providers in Grand Rapids offer full-day, full-year care, yet available services do not meet the needs of the community.

Continue to support efforts to improve the quality of services by helping providers with professional development and business management. All early childhood education services should be provided with high-quality teachers, curricula, and facilities. In Grand Rapids, 88 percent of providers who participated in Michigan's Great Start to Quality program achieved a rating of 3 stars or higher. Half of Grand Rapids' licensed and registered slots were providers with a rating of 4 or 5 stars.

Sparse provider participation suggests obstacles with the current system. Quality overall should be encouraged and improvements made to the current system through management of the process and professional development. Provider support will allow for growth of current providers in a meaningful and high-quality way that is best suited for both the providers and the communities they serve.

One solution for creating greater access to high-quality and full-day, full-year early care for low-income families is for stakeholders to support providers in navigating the use of blending and braiding techniques. Through this process, providers diversify their funds and clientele, while also increasing the quality of services and providing families with inclusive and comprehensive care.

A System for All Children presents an overview of the needs across the city as well as a more comprehensive look at service gaps by program and neighborhood. Practical and straightforward steps that build on the current progress in Grand Rapids will improve the ECE system. These recommendations based on the data and spatial analysis presented serve as a starting place for both discussion and action to increase the amount and quality of ECE services. Greater access for all families will serve the needs of children, families, and the community as a whole.

CITYWIDE OVERVIEW

Early childhood education (ECE) services provide extensive benefits for children, families, and communities. In Grand Rapids, almost 12,000 children were likely to need some form of ECE care. Given the importance of these services, it is imperative for the community to understand how it is and is not meeting the needs of children and families.

In 2016, providers in Grand Rapids offered ECE services for over 7,500 children. About half of these slots were in highly rated and full-day, full-year providers. Children ages three to five had available services for every child requiring market rate care. The Great Start to Readiness Program (GSRP) served about 80 percent of low-income 4-year-olds with a successful pre-kindergarten program.

Infants and toddlers and low-income children, without access to GSRP, had minimal slots available across Grand Rapids. Low-income neighborhoods had the highest need for additional ECE slots. Critically, vulnerable populations lacked the services they required.

A System for All Children examines provider supply with the understanding that families travel within and outside the city to access ECE care (see detailed methodology in the appendix). It is likely that families will seek the highest quality care providers closest to their home or work, though these providers may fall outside their city boundaries.

This report uses available data on the formal ECE system, but recognizes that some of these children were served by informal family, friend, and neighbor care, which is vital to the Grand Rapids community. When data is available, supply included only the Grand Rapids children served by a licensed or registered provider in 2016.

Table 1: Citywide Service Gap

Age Group	Total Number of Children	Number of Children in Need of Care	Available Licensed & Registered Slots	Service Gap
0-2-Year-Olds	8,805	5,304	844	-4,460
3-5-Year-Olds	8,472	6,400	6,811	411
Total	17,277	11,704	7,655	-4,049

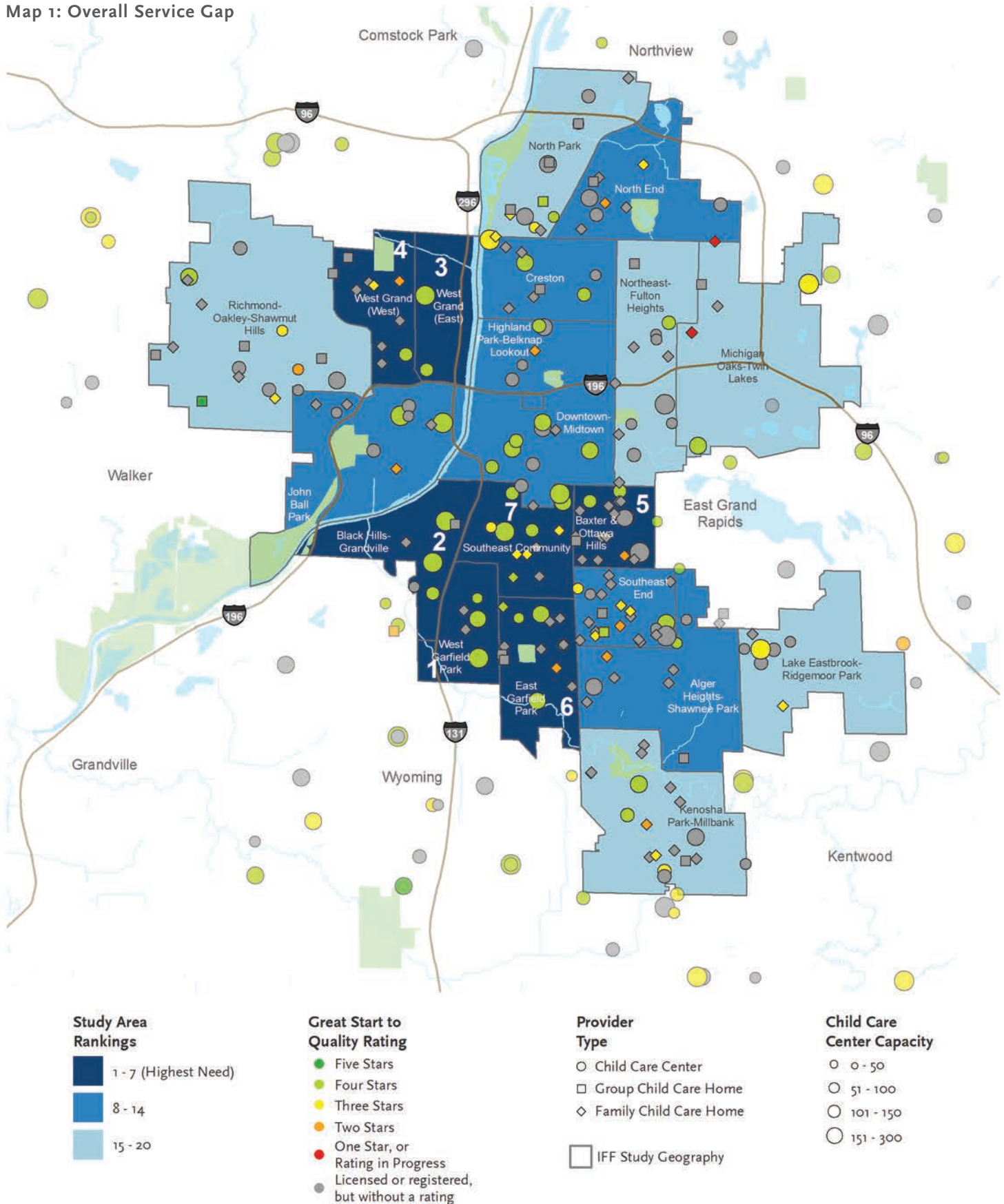
GRAND RAPIDS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In 2016, approximately 17,300 children from birth to 5-years-old lived in Grand Rapids. After accounting for statistical trends in early childhood education demand across similar Midwest cities, about 5,500 of those children were unlikely to have a demand for a licensed or registered provider.¹ This left 11,704 children in Grand Rapids likely to need ECE services. Of providers serving the Grand Rapids area, supply was available for 7,655 children in licensed and registered programs.

The remaining 4,049 children were without formal ECE services.² Most families nationally cite cost and lack of open slots as the biggest obstacles for accessing care for their young children.³ Both cost and access impacted the availability of early childhood education slots in Grand Rapids.

The greatest need for additional service in Grand Rapids was infant and toddler care, with a service gap of 4,460 (see Table 1). This is common across the United States with 36 percent of US families with 1-year-olds citing a lack of open slots as their primary difficulty in finding care.⁴ In Grand Rapids, there were only 844 slots available.

Map 1: Overall Service Gap



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016. US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates. Michigan Department of Human Services. Michigan Department of Education. Great Start Collaborative, Kent County. Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Table 2: Service Gap in the Highest-Need Neighborhoods

Age Group	Total Number of Children	Number of Children in Need of Care	Available Licensed & Registered Slots	Service Gap	Percent of Citywide Service Gap
0-2-Year-Olds	3,407	2,406	189	-2,217	55%
3-5-Year-Olds	3,318	2,714	2,032	-682	17%
Total	6,725	5,120	2,221	-2,899	72%

Citywide, Grand Rapids had enough supply to meet the needs of 3- to 5-year-olds with a surplus of 411 slots. Most of these slots available were in market rate and Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) providers. These services were not distributed consistently throughout the city leaving some areas with a substantial scarcity of available slots.

The programs with the least supply were state and federally funded programs, besides GSRP. Subsidized care for both age groups, Early Head Start, and Head Start all had a service level below 30 percent. Neighborhoods with many low-income families were particularly vulnerable as those neighborhoods tended to have insufficient service levels in general and the programs they required had inadequate supply across Grand Rapids.

To identify the neighborhoods with the highest overall need, the individual ranks of both age groups –birth to 2-year-olds and 3- to 5-year-olds– were averaged. The highest-need neighborhoods, displayed on Map 1, are:

1. West Garfield Park
2. Black Hills-Grandville
3. West Grand (East)
4. West Grand (West)
5. Baxter and Ottawa Hills
6. East Garfield Park
7. Southeast Community

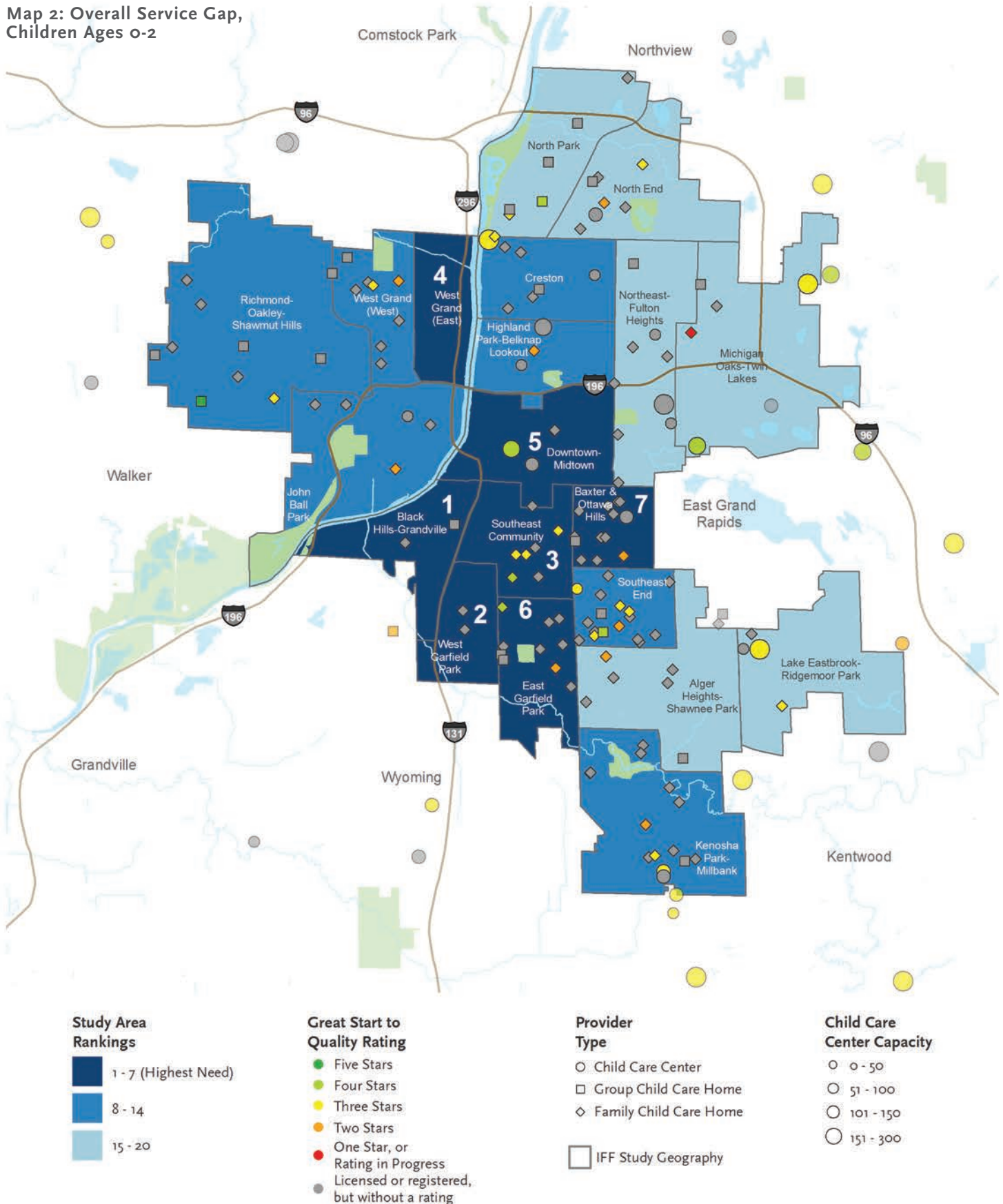
Over two-thirds of the service gap was concentrated in one-third of the neighborhoods in Grand Rapids. The need, supply and service gap for these seven neighborhoods is show in Table 2. Given limited availability of resources, stakeholders concentrating their efforts on the highest-need neighborhoods would provide the greatest benefits for the most children.

The highest-need neighborhoods within each age group are displayed on Maps 2 and 3. The ranks, demand, and service of each neighborhoods are shown on the accompanying tables. These maps illustrate the needs of different areas and age groups within Grand Rapids.

The composition of the service gap varies by neighborhood with varied demand and supply for each age group. For example, the Downtown-Midtown area ranked as the fifth highest-need neighborhood for birth to 2-year-olds with a gap of about 300 slots. The same neighborhood ranked last for the need of 3- to 5-year-olds with a surplus of over 200 slots. As the Downtown area is a major employment center, the surplus slots are likely filled by children whose parents work in the area.

For the infant and toddler age group, the service gap in these seven Grand Rapids neighborhoods accounted for over half of the total service gap. With only 189 slots

Map 2: Overall Service Gap,
Children Ages 0-2



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

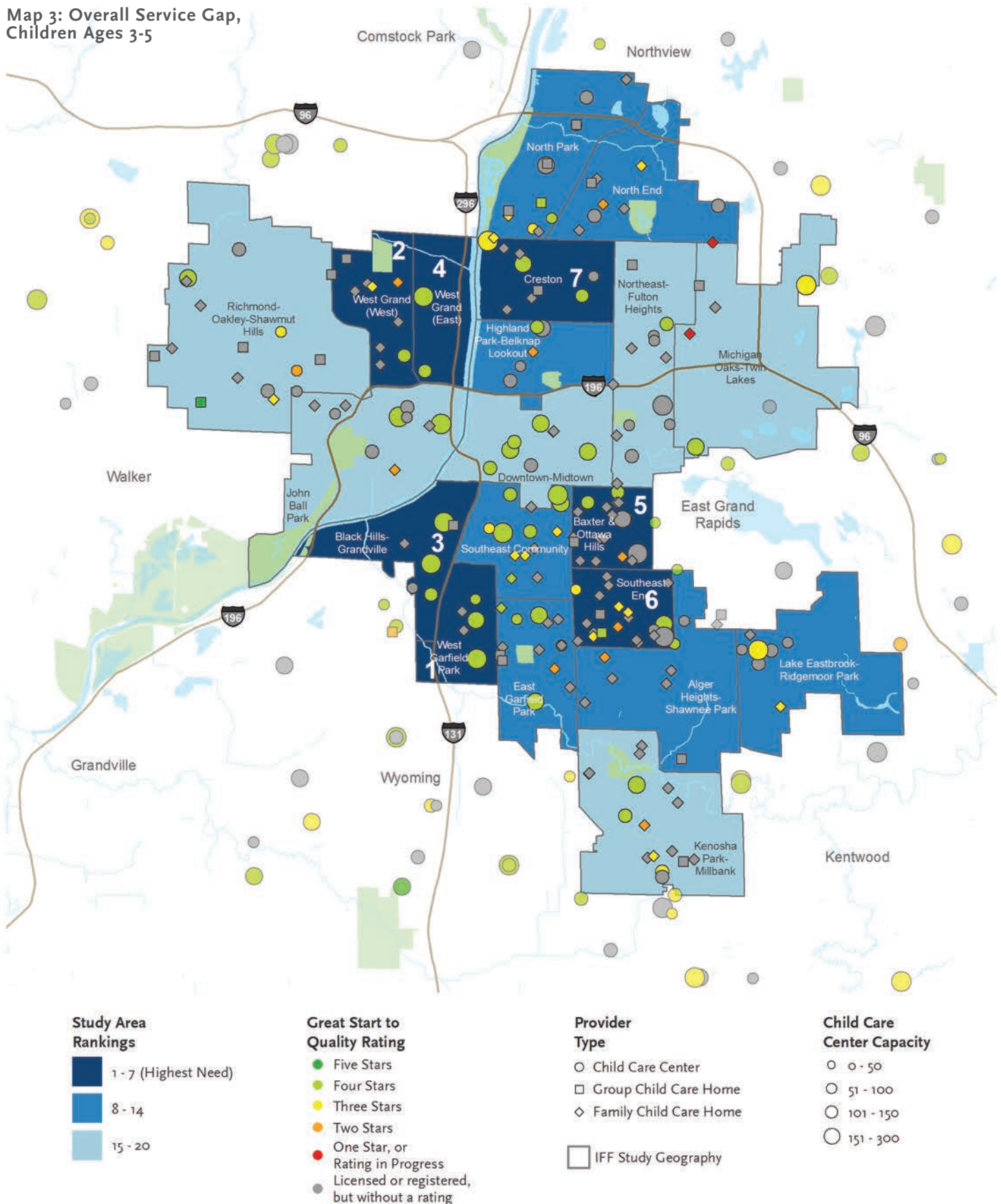
ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

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Table 3: Ranking Table of Overall Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	Black Hills-Grandville	421	17	-404	4%
2	West Garfield Park	420	22	-398	5%
3	Southeast Community	368	38	-330	10%
4	West Grand (East)	318	19	-299	6%
5	Downtown-Midtown	336	43	-293	13%
6	East Garfield Park	319	46	-273	14%
7	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	284	26	-258	9%
8	West Grand (West)	276	21	-255	8%
9	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	276	28	-248	10%
10	Southeast End	278	37	-241	13%
11	John Ball Park	264	24	-240	9%
12	Creston	277	41	-236	15%
13	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	250	51	-199	20%
14	Kenosha Park-Millbank	267	90	-177	34%
15	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	242	69	-173	29%
16	Northeast-Fulton Heights	163	62	-101	38%
17	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	142	52	-90	37%
18	North End	120	38	-82	32%
19	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	157	75	-82	48%
20	North Park	126	45	-81	36%

Map 3: Overall Service Gap,
Children Ages 3-5



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Table 4: Ranking Table of Overall Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	West Garfield Park	480	284	-196	59%
2	West Grand (West)	384	210	-174	55%
3	Black Hills-Grandville	448	320	-128	71%
4	West Grand (East)	314	218	-96	69%
5	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	319	241	-78	76%
6	Southeast End	310	252	-58	81%
7	Creston	332	281	-51	85%
8	East Garfield Park	350	331	-19	95%
9	North End	205	195	-10	95%
10	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	274	279	5	102%
11	Southeast Community	419	428	9	102%
12	North Park	209	273	64	131%
13	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	201	293	92	146%
14	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	342	448	106	131%
15	Northeast-Fulton Heights	234	352	118	150%
16	John Ball Park	360	489	129	136%
17	Kenosha Park-Millbank	380	522	142	137%
18	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	298	457	159	153%
19	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	218	406	188	186%
20	Downtown-Midtown	323	532	209	165%

available, the service level was just 8 percent. There were 2,217 children aged birth to 2 without access to services.

The service gap in the highest-need neighborhoods for children ages 3 to 5 was 17 percent of the citywide service gap. Though there is an appearance of most need being met, the supply was not available equally for the population. These seven neighborhoods had less services available for this age group than Grand Rapids overall.

The deficit of 682 slots in these neighborhoods contrasts with the surplus of 411 slots citywide.⁵ It may be possible for some families to access surplus slots in other neighborhoods. Transportation can be difficult or unmanageable, especially for working families, single parents, and low-income children. Furthermore, the excess slots available in some areas do not negate the need for additional high-quality services close to families in need.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY

In order to provide appropriate early childhood education services that meet the needs of Grand Rapids children, it is necessary to understand the local and cultural dynamics of families in each neighborhood. Cultural competency is key to building relationships with families and communities, as well as offering high-quality programs to diverse populations throughout the city.⁶ Recognizing the influence of poverty, race/ethnicity, cultural assumptions, parental involvement, and other considerations deepens and strengthens the impact of ECE services.

Need for early childhood education is linked to child population and level of poverty. These factors relate to

the amount and type of services offered in communities across the United States. In Grand Rapids, this relationship is stronger than IFF's research has previously found. Stakeholders should understand how population and poverty relate to need in order to develop a comprehensive and applicable plan for the ECE system.

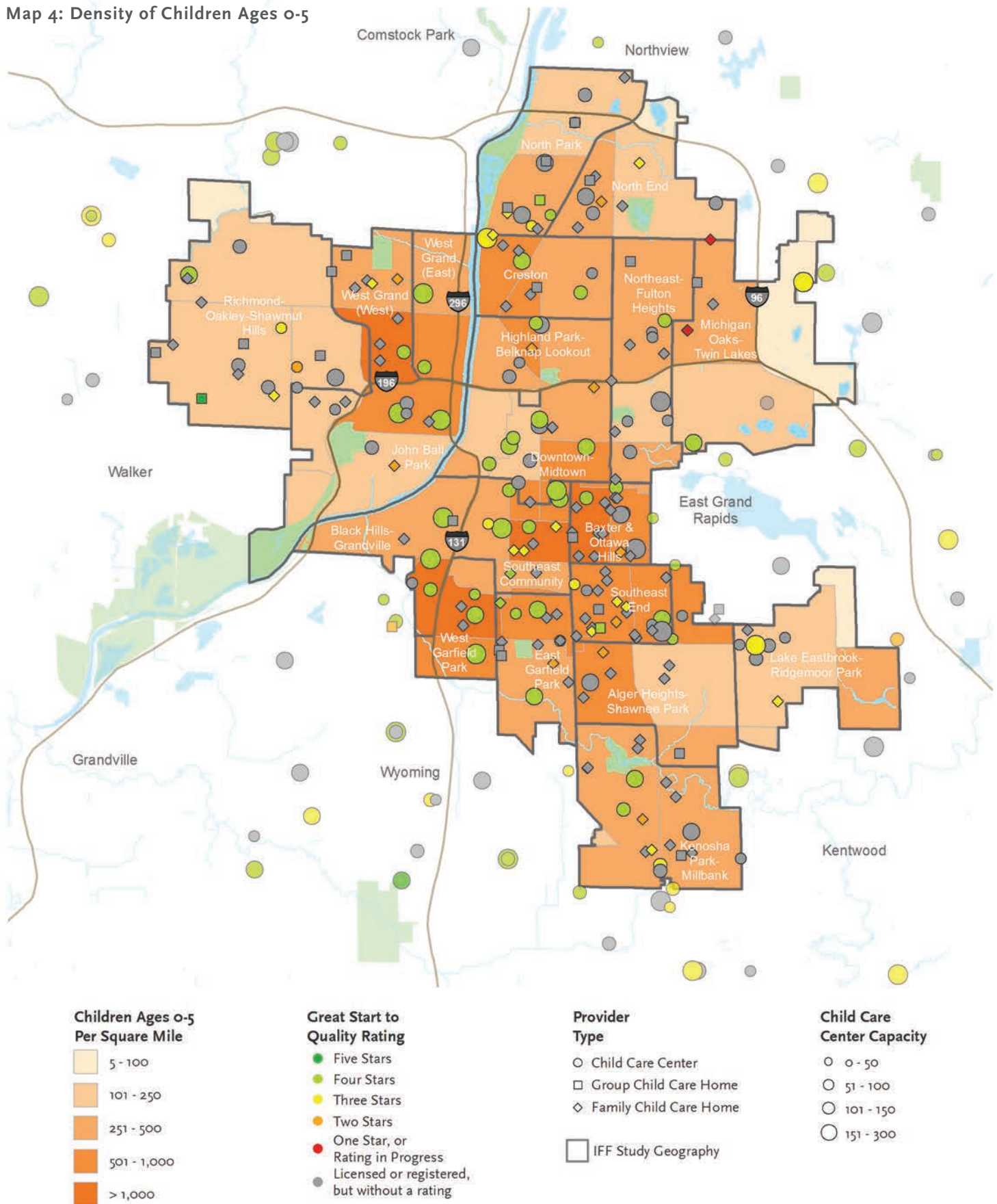
Many of the highest need neighborhoods also had the largest child populations. The density of children across Grand Rapids is displayed on Map 4. Neighborhoods with the largest amounts of young children clearly have a high demand for ECE services. West Garfield Park, Black Hills-Grandville, and Southeast Community neighborhoods had the largest populations of young children and were ranked first, second, and seventh in terms of need.

Some neighborhoods with high populations of young children had greater access to ECE services. The next four densest populations ranked tenth or below. The neighborhood with the fourth highest child population, Alger Heights-Shawnee Park, was ranked fourteenth in terms of need. Demographics of a community played a greater role in determining the availability of ECE services in Grand Rapids.

Just over half of Grand Rapids children were living in families with incomes greater than 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and did not qualify for state and federally funded ECE.⁷ Given these demographics (see Table 5 on page 21), the highest demand for ECE services was for market rate care with over 8,000 children requiring services.

There were still 47 percent of the population who were eligible for and required subsidies for early childhood education services. The areas across Grand Rapids with the

Map 4: Density of Children Ages 0-5

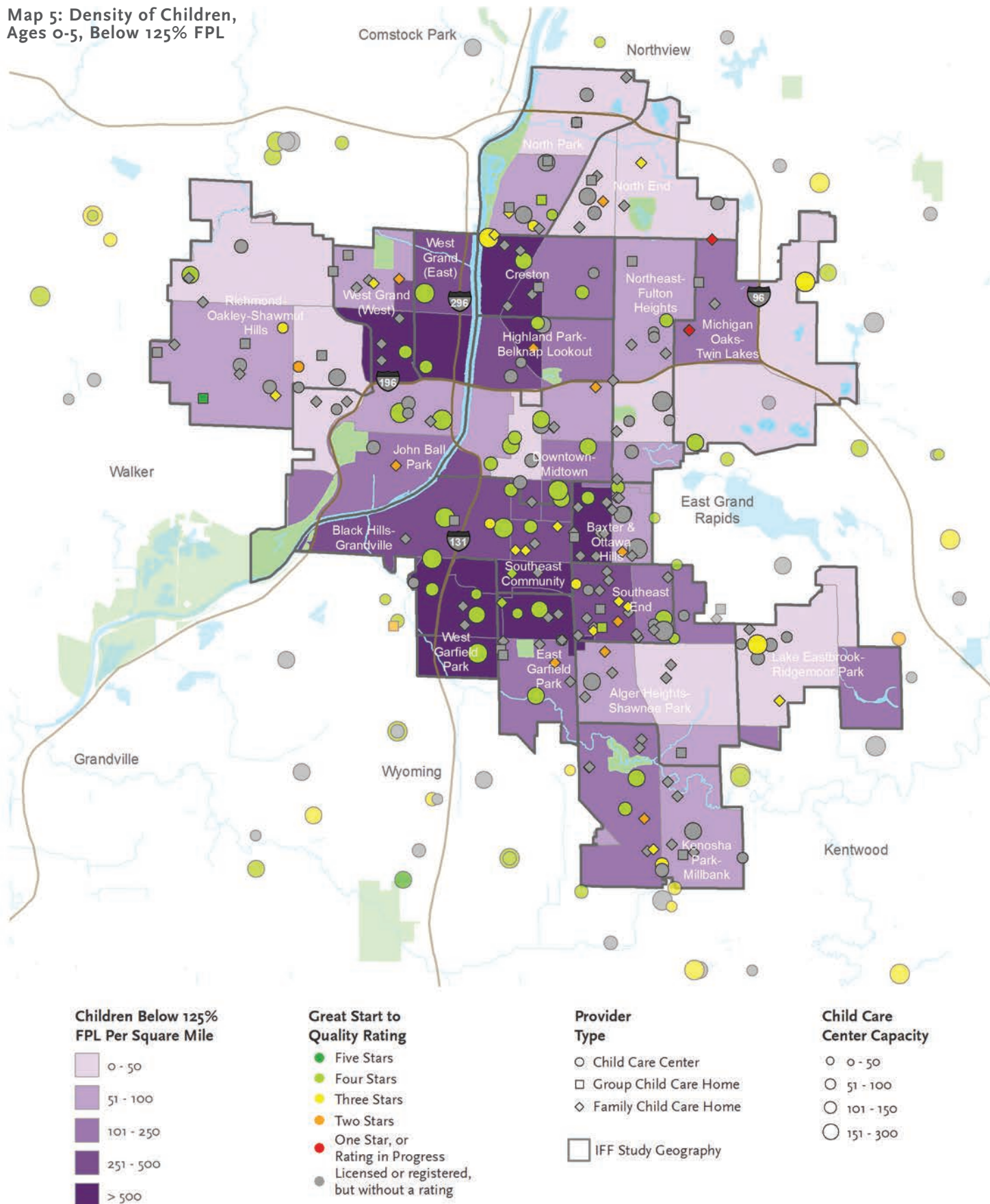


Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

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This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Map 5: Density of Children, Ages 0-5, Below 125% FPL

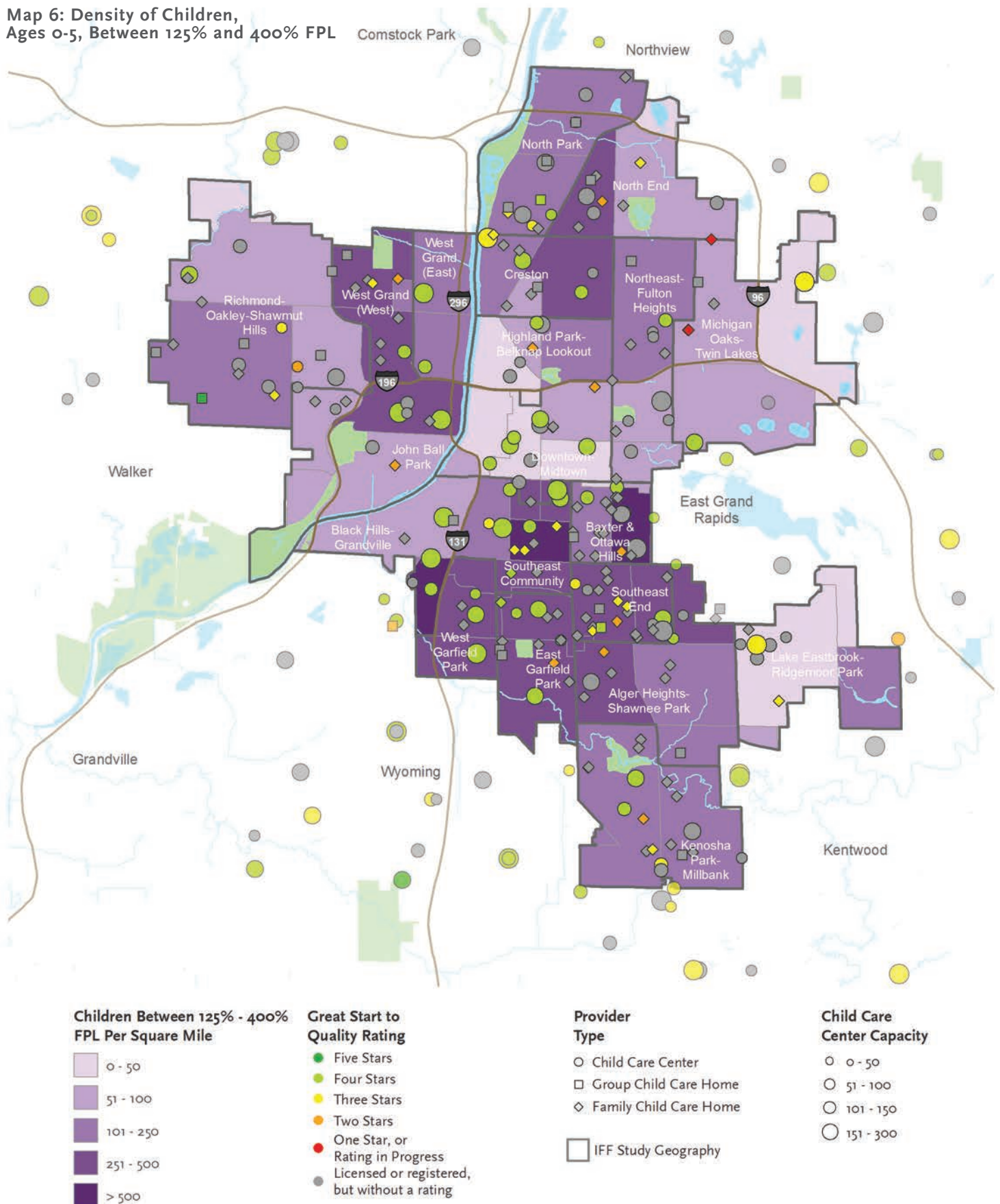


Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

**Map 6: Density of Children,
Ages 0-5, Between 125% and 400% FPL**



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Table 5: Citywide Population Characteristics

Child Population	
0-2-Year-Olds	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	8,472
Poverty, Children 0-5-Years-Old	
% Below 125% FPL	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	44%
% Above 400% FPL	9%
Race and Ethnicity	
Hispanic	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)	
Married	60%
Single Parent	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)	
Two Parents, Both Working	33%
Two Parents, One Working	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	2%
Single Parent, Working	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	10%

highest proportions of low-income children are displayed on Map 5. Almost half of all children lived in families with incomes at or below 125 percent FPL, or \$30,375 for a family of four.

Five out of seven of the highest-need neighborhoods also had one of the seven largest concentrations of children living below 125 percent FPL. In all of the highest-need neighborhoods, at least half of young children qualified for subsidized care. The top three neighborhoods – West Garfield Park, Black Hills-Grandville, and West Grand

(East) – also had the highest number of children, 60 percent or more, eligible for Early Head Start or Head Start.

Need for ECE services and poverty were highly related in Grand Rapids, though some low-income communities had greater availability. Both Highland Park-Belknap Lookout and Creston had high levels of poverty, but fell below the top seven neighborhoods in terms of need. These neighborhoods though, as across Grand Rapids, had insufficient services available for children eligible for state and federally funded programs.

Even with Michigan's low eligibility rates (see inset box), there were not enough slots available to serve the children currently eligible. If the income level for eligibility is increased, the service level would be even lower.

Another 44 percent of children live in families with incomes between 125 percent and 400 percent FPL. These families, illustrated on Map 6, were unlikely to be able to afford child care and yet were ineligible for state and federal assistance. The median family income in Michigan in 2016 was less than \$60,000. A two-parent household with one infant would spend 16.5 percent of their income on ECE.⁸ Restrictive subsidy income requirements in Michigan increased the size of this population compared to other states. With much of the population of Grand Rapids in this intermediate group, it is necessary to include their needs when creating a comprehensive plan for ECE services.

Only nine percent of the population with young children in Grand Rapids were likely to be able to afford market rate care. Families above 400 percent FPL tend to be able to comfortably afford early childhood education services.⁹ A family of four with two children at 400 percent FPL made \$97,200 annually and would likely spend over 14 percent

of this income on child care. This amount was still over the ten percent of income federal guidelines for affordable ECE care.¹⁰

Cultural considerations can impact the ECE services provided and play an important role for family and community involvement. Stakeholders should consider factors such as family culture, race/ethnicity, first language, etc. to create relevant and diverse opportunities for families and children. In Grand Rapids, the majority of children are Caucasian, though each neighborhood has particular demographics. The neighborhood profiles in this report can serve as a starting point for addressing the specific cultures and needs of families in these neighborhood.

Family and parental needs should also be considered when creating ECE services.¹¹ Almost 70 percent of Grand Rapids families are likely to need access to full-day, full-year services. Households where both parents work or with a single working parent often require comprehensive early childhood education services.

Families, particularly women, who have access to ECE care perform better at work, attain a higher education, and increase their salary. ECE services offered throughout the day and year afford parents access to greater opportunities, while also providing consistent care and education for young children.

Early childhood education services should be tailored to the specific needs and local environments of those served. This report presents an overview of the societal factors in Grand Rapids and the highest-need neighborhoods. Each neighborhood is unique. Culturally competent providers work with the community to understand their needs and take these factors into account.

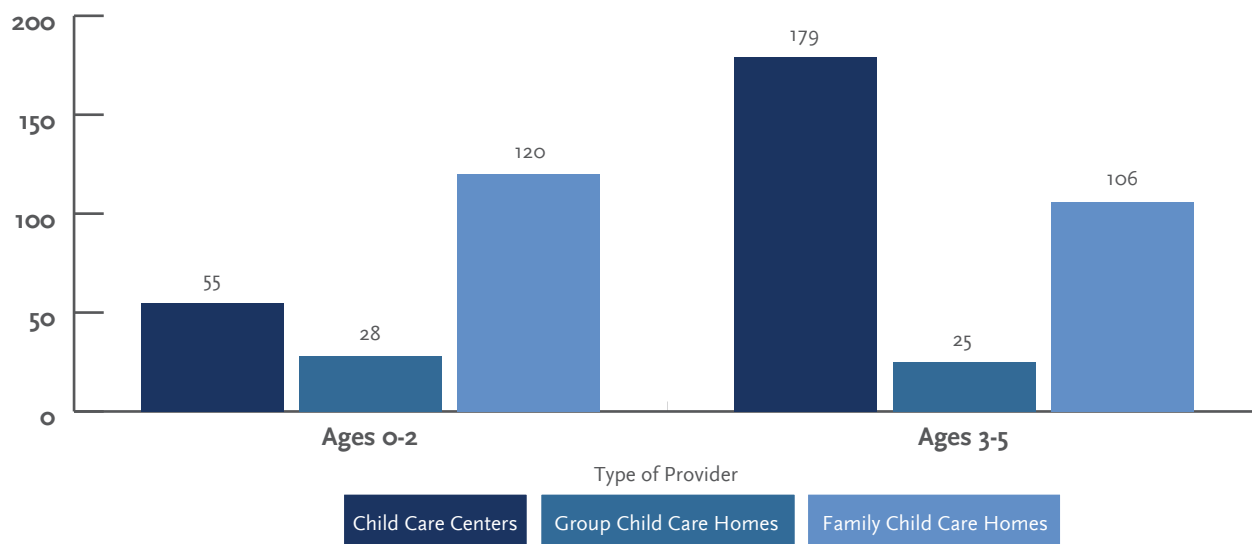
Subsidized Early Childhood Education in Michigan

Michigan's Child Development and Care Program (CDC) has one of the lowest income eligibility rates in the nation. Subsidized care is a federally funded program, administered by states whose legislatures set eligibility levels. The current rate in Michigan for eligibility is 125 percent FPL, which was just increased for 2017. It was even lower, 121 percent FPL, in 2016 when this study was conducted. In comparison, the Michigan eligibility rate was over 175 percent FPL in 2001 and the national average was about 185 percent in 2016.¹² The restrictive rate leaves a number of families ineligible for services, who are unlikely to be able to pay for ECE without assistance.

Concurrently, the reimbursement rate for Michigan's CDC program is among the lowest in the nation. Reimbursement is granted based on the Great Start to Quality rating of providers. A 5 star Family and Group Child Care Homes received approximately the market rate in Michigan for services. The base rate of reimbursement, however, was as low as 60 percent of market rate. For Child Care Centers, the reimbursement rates fell below the market rate even for 5 star providers.¹³ Charges beyond the reimbursement provided must be paid out of pocket by parents, though providers may choose whether to charge the extra cost.

The strict eligibility requirements and minimal reimbursement rates are detrimental for both families and providers. Families were left without subsidies though they could not afford care. Even those eligible for subsidies often had to pay greater out of pocket and had difficulty finding services. Providers were disincentivized from taking subsidy eligible children. When they did, often did not receive full payment for services.

Chart 1. Number of Licensed and Registered Providers*



*Providers who offered services to both age groups are displayed twice on this chart.

HIGH-QUALITY COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

In order to acquire the many benefits from ECE services, Grand Rapids children must have access to high-quality providers. Widespread evidence has found that high-quality early childhood education programs provide long-term educational and social benefits for children.¹⁴

Positive affects are compounded for children in low-income households with far-reaching improvements in educational outcomes over their peers who did not receive ECE care.¹⁵ Michigan's state funded pre-kindergarten program has successfully addressed a significant portion of this need in Grand Rapids.¹⁶ Despite the accomplishment of GSRP, greater services for state and federally funded ECE are necessary in Grand Rapids. Children eligible for these programs—almost half of the city—require not just slots, but high-quality slots.

In Grand Rapids, a majority of providers participating in Michigan's quality rating system, Great Start to Quality, achieved a 3 star rating or higher. Approximately 30 percent received a 4 star or 5 star rating. Continuing to increase the quality of services available will provide children the greatest possible childhood developments.

The benefits of ECE extend beyond the children served to the families and parents using these services as well. ECE services increase the current workforce and increase the abilities and social aptitude of future generations thereby benefiting the entire community.¹⁷ Stakeholders can continue to develop connections between businesses and ECE across Grand Rapids.

The benefits from ECE are highest when children have access to high-quality, full-day, full-year programs.¹⁸ Of licensed and registered providers, about half were offering

full-day, full-year services for families. These providers were offering vital services, but not all children and families had access to the services they required.

PROVIDER LANDSCAPE

In 2016, 413 licensed or registered providers served Grand Rapids offering 7,655 slots. Most of these slots were for 3- to 5-year-olds (see Charts 1 and 2). For children ages three to five most of the services, 96 percent, were in Child Care Centers. Approximately 250 additional slots were available from licensed Group or registered Family Child Care Homes.

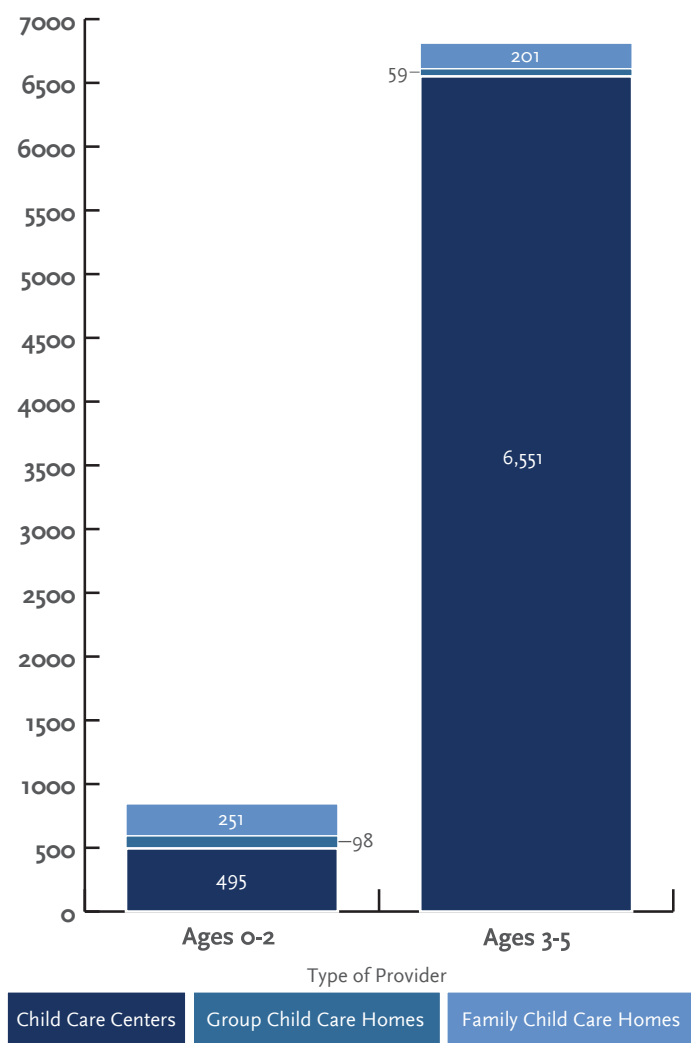
Available provider supply was more diverse for the birth to two age group with about 60 percent of the slots offered by licensed Child Care Centers and the other 40 percent offered by licensed or registered Child Care Homes.

About 20 more home-based providers offered services to infants and toddlers than 3- to 5-year-olds. There were over 120 more center-based providers for children ages three to five, which have greater capacity. Therefore, there were 6,000 additional center-based slots available for 3- to 5-year-olds.

There were many quality unlicensed providers serving Grand Rapids, who provided integral care to families and communities. Unlicensed family, friend, and neighborhood care is and will continue to be an important part of the early childhood education system in Grand Rapids.

These providers often provided excellent care, but they are not subject to an inspection conducted by the Michigan Department of Human Services Bureau of Children and

Chart 2. Available Slots at Licensed and Registered Providers



Adult Licensing. Detailed data is not available on providers who do not complete this inspection. Therefore, they were not counted toward supply in this report.

Many families prefer the services offered by family, friend, and neighbor care. IFF's calculation of demand accounts for this preference by determining the likelihood that a

Table 6: Great Start to Quality Rating by Provider Type Ages, 0-2

0-2-Year-Olds		5 Stars		4 Stars		3 Stars		2 Stars		1 Star		Total	
Provider Type		Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots
Child Care Centers	Count	0	0	8	65	20	166	1	1	0	0	29	232
	Percent Within Type	0.0%	0.0%	27.6%	28.0%	69.0%	71.6%	3.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Group Child Care Homes	Count	1	2	2	9	3	8	1	4	1	4	8	27
	Percent Within Type	12.5%	7.4%	25.0%	33.3%	37.5%	29.6%	12.5%	14.8%	12.5%	14.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Family Child Care Homes	Count	0	0	2	9	26	56	15	32	1	4	44	101
	Percent Within Type	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	8.9%	59.1%	55.4%	34.1%	31.7%	2.3%	4.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	1	2	12	83	49	230	17	37	2	8	81	360
	Percent of Age Group	1.2%	0.6%	14.8%	23.1%	60.5%	63.9%	21.0%	10.3%	2.5%	2.2%	100.0%	100.0%

5 Stars – Program demonstrates highest quality.

4 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across almost all standards.

3 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across several standards.

2 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across some standards.

1 Stars – Program meets licensing requirement and is participating in Great Start to Quality.

All providers that are licensed or registered with Michigan's Department of Human Services are automatically given an "empty star" rating, which is different from a rating of 1 star.

family in Grand Rapids will choose formal, licensed and registered, ECE services. (See the methodology in the appendix for further details.)

STRIVING FOR QUALITY

Grand Rapids ECE programs must provide appropriate and consistent curricula, engaging and well-supported teachers, small classroom sizes, familial involvement, and be in a quality facility and environment.¹⁹ When ECE providers offer high-quality services, children and families excel, both in their current circumstances and in the future.

In order to assess the quality of early childhood education providers, the federal government recommended that states develop a Quality Rating and Improvement System. The Michigan system is known as Great Start to Quality (GSQ) and was developed in 2011. It serves as one possible tool and resource for evaluating and increasing the quality of the ECE system.

Michigan's GSQ measures quality based on five categories: staff qualifications and experience, family and community engagement, administration and management, learning environment, and curriculum and instruction.²⁰ Based on the assessment, a rating of 1 to 5 stars is assigned.

Table 7: Great Start to Quality Rating by Provider Type Ages, 3-5

3-5-Year-Olds		5 Stars		4 Stars		3 Stars		2 Stars		1 Star		Total	
Provider Type		Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots	Providers	Slots
Child Care Centers	Count	2	37	64	3,939	32	463	1	5	0	0	99	4,444
	Percent Within Type	2.0%	0.8%	64.6%	88.6%	32.3%	10.4%	1.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Group Child Care Homes	Count	1	1	2	4	2	7	1	1	1	1	7	14
	Percent Within Type	14.3%	7.1%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	50.0%	14.3%	7.1%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%	100.0%
Family Child Care Homes	Count	0	0	2	3	21	53	14	21	2	5	39	82
	Percent Within Type	0.0%	0.0%	5.1%	3.7%	53.8%	64.6%	35.9%	25.6%	5.1%	6.1%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	3	38	68	3,946	55	523	16	27	3	6	145	4,540
	Percent of Age Group	2.1%	0.8%	46.9%	86.9%	37.9%	11.5%	11.0%	0.6%	2.1%	0.1%	100.0%	100.0%

5 Stars – Program demonstrates highest quality.

4 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across almost all standards.

3 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across several standards.

2 Stars – Program demonstrates quality across some standards.

1 Stars – Program meets licensing requirement and is participating in Great Start to Quality.

All providers that are licensed or registered with Michigan's Department of Human Services are automatically given an "empty star" rating, which is different from a rating of 1 star.

Throughout the report, each map displays a provider's GSQ rating by color.²¹

A quality rating system of ECE providers can provide many benefits. In addition to guiding parents in selecting the best program for their children, the standards provide stakeholders with a common vision for moving toward a high-quality ECE system for all young children. Providers in Grand Rapids also benefit from participation by receiving access to state administered funds based on the GSQ ratings.²²

In the Grand Rapids ECE system in 2016, approximately

41 percent of providers participated in GSQ. These contributed 64 percent of the city's licensed and registered slots. Of those participating, 88 percent received a rating of 3, 4, or 5 stars and supplied most available slots. Fewer providers, 43 percent, achieved a rating of 4 or 5 stars and supplied half of the city's licensed and registered slots.

For infants and toddlers, 81 licensed and registered providers participated in GSQ, which was 40 percent of licensed and registered infant and toddler providers. They offered 360 slots (see Table 6), or 43 percent of available licensed and registered infant and toddler slots. Family and Group Child Care Homes were half of the providers

for this age group and often lack the resources necessary to complete the GSQ requirements.

For 3- to 5-year-olds, 145 licensed and registered providers participated in GSQ, which was 47 percent of licensed and registered 3- to 5-year-old providers. These providers offered 4,540 slots (see Table 7), or two-thirds of licensed and registered 3- to 5-year-old slots. About 70 percent of the participating providers in this age group were Child Care Centers.

Of the 3- to 5-year-old providers participating in GSQ, about 40 percent were Great Start Readiness Program providers and provided 60 percent of the available slots. These providers are required to participate and must receive a rating of 3 stars or higher to receive funding. GSRP providers accounted for 44 percent of the 3- to 5-year-old providers receiving a rating of 3 stars or higher and 76 percent of those achieving a rating of 4 stars or higher.

GSQ has many potential benefits, however, the lack of participation of over half of providers in Grand Rapids suggests obstacles to involvement. The requirement to participate accounts for most of the provider participation in GSQ. Possible barriers for providers include:

- Difficult or unclear administrative process
- High costs associated with achieving a higher rating, including staff capacity and credentialing
- Lack of perceived benefits from participation

Stakeholders can work with providers to streamline the process and assist with increasing ratings. Michigan has increased the benefits of participation by tying GSQ rating to reimbursement rates. A recent national survey found that most parents do not view ratings as very important when choosing an ECE service.²³ Beyond increasing

provider participation, it is necessary to increase parental use of GSQ when choosing their ECE service.

Whether using GSQ or not, it is important that Grand Rapids stakeholders to ensure that the services are with high-quality staff and in a high-quality facility. Offering professional development and training in business management can increase the quality of services and help providers to maintain and grow their business.

FULL-DAY, FULL-YEAR CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

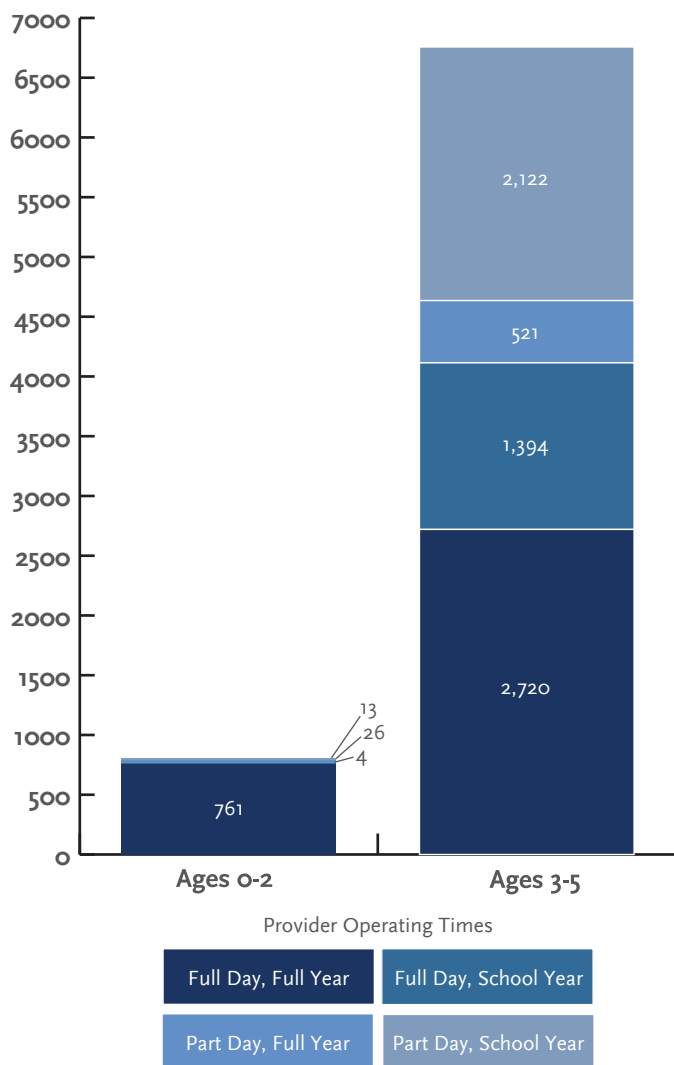
About half of licensed and registered providers offered full-day, full-year services in 2016. The slots from these providers were almost half of current availability. These full-day, full-year services, however, accounted for less than a third of likely demand in Grand Rapids.

In Grand Rapids, 76 percent of infants and toddlers and 57 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds were without access to full-day, full-year services. Part-day and school-year care are valuable services and can meet the needs of some. ECE care that is full-day and full-year provides a higher level of support for families. Households where all parents present work full-time, 70 percent of Grand Rapids, often require these services.

Almost all available licensed and registered infant and toddler slots were available full-day, full-year. (See Chart 3). Available slots only met 14 percent of all infant and toddler demand.

For children ages three to five, about 40 percent of available slots were full-day, full-year. These slots met 43 percent of the 3- to 5-year-old demand.

Chart 3. Provider Supply by Operating Times



COMPREHENSIVE CARE THROUGH BRAIDED AND BLENDED FUNDING

Comprehensive care affords parents stability in employment or school and children stability in care and education. ECE services offered through the full-day and full-year places the needs of families and children at the forefront.

In Michigan, Child Development and Care Program (CDC) subsidized care providers funding for full-day, full-year care for low-income working parents. Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program in Grand Rapids offer full-day services based on school hours, with some offering full-year services. Low-income families working typical hours would need further services beyond the school day, which would likely require out-of-pocket expenses and transportation to a different location.

A potential technique for providing full-day, full-year care programs to low-income families is to blend or braid funding sources. Blending occurs when funding from two or more separate sources is used to pay for one set of program services to a group of children. Braiding occurs when funding from two or more sources is brought together to support the total cost of services for an individual child. These mechanisms are used to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of available public funding sources.²⁴

Full-day, full-year ECE services are vital to a stable and high-quality workforce in Grand Rapids. Stakeholders can work to tie services for young children to the workforce to create relationships with the business community and develop more comprehensive services for families.

Several providers and organizations in Grand Rapids are working to provide comprehensive services through blending and braiding (see inset box on next page). Providers like Grand Rapids Community College continue to expand the services they offer children, families, and ECE

Notable Providers

In 2016, some Grand Rapids providers used blending and braiding of state and federal funds to meet the needs of their communities. By accepting funds from the CDC program and the GSRP, these providers offered comprehensive care to low-income communities. The West Michigan Academy of Environmental Sciences provided high-quality care with a 4 star GSQ rating. The Early Discovery Center offered full-day, full-year services to children and families. Both providers are working to meet the needs of their communities in important ways.

The Child Development Center at the Baxter Community Center offered impressive services through blending and braiding, full-day and full-year care, and a 4 star GSQ

rating. Baxter's CDC serves children from birth to 12-years-old with about thirty percent of the families served with an income of less than \$15,000. The Center is located in Baxter-Ottawa Hills, providing the fifth highest-need neighborhood with vital services.

Baxter Community Center is a partner of the Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative (ELNC), which works with community partners in Grand Rapids to create and sustain high-quality early childhood education. The ELNC provided 576 slots in its community partners in 2016 supporting community-focused strategies and helping providers use braiding and blending techniques. In 2017, the ELNC received a federal grant for its Early Head Start Child Care Partnership program and opened up 88 slots for infants and toddlers in Grand Rapids.

teachers.²⁵ Stakeholders should look to expand and replicate these successful efforts.

Use of blending and braiding has the potential to offer many benefits for families and providers in Grand Rapids. It would provide a greater variety of funding sources and, therefore, greater diversity of children in an ECE facility. This technique would expand the availability of funds for providers, giving them greater flexibility and more consistent revenue streams.

In Grand Rapids, providers seeking to use both market rate care and state and federal funding would be able to offer services to a much larger portion of children in the area. For children, it would expand the social and educational opportunities available to them.

A diversity of funds could also allow providers to serve more ages and program creating a more comprehensive ECE facility. Blending and braiding would allow for improved access to continual care for children as fewer would need to move from program to program throughout the day and as they grow up. Consistent care is less disruptive for learning, provides a greater support system for working parents, and would allow providers to foster a stable client base.

Various strategies can be used to incorporate blending and braiding into an ECE system and can offer support for complementary services, such as parent education, health, and nutrition programs. Blending and braiding offer many benefits, but can be difficult to achieve with complicated requirements from different programs and the duplication of administrative costs.

FINDINGS BY PROGRAM TYPE

This section of *A System for All Children* examines early childhood education availability by program type. These program classifications are largely based on the income levels of parents and guardians. By looking at each program separately, this section highlights the distinct supply gap for children in each category while also recognizing the need for care for families across income levels.

Programmatic services levels differ across neighborhoods with some providing an oversupply of slots and other areas with a shortage of services. The ranking tables for each map present the demand, supply, service gap, and service level of each neighborhood for that category of care. The spatial analysis illustrates the areas with greater needs for each ECE service type.

PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The demand, service gap, and service level by program across Grand Rapids is presented in Table 8. Programs include market rate care for families of all incomes and early childhood education for families eligible to participate in various subsidy programs: Child Development and Care subsidy (CDC), Head Start and Early Head Start, and the Great Start Readiness Program. The overall service gap in Grand Rapids showed a high need for the birth to two age group. Isolating by program type reveals the services and neighborhoods where the three to five age group were underserved.

The overall service for 3- to 5-year-olds more than met need, however, both subsidized care and Head Start had minimal service levels. Despite the overall availability of

Program Type Definitions

Subsidized Care: Federal grant allocated by states and subject to state laws. Michigan's Child Development and Care Program administers this program with an eligibility rate of 121 percent of the Federal Poverty Level in 2016.

Head Start/Early Head Start: Federal grant program funding early care, education, and vital services for children in families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Great Start Readiness Program: Michigan's pre-kindergarten program serving 4-year-olds in families with incomes at or below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Market Rate Care: Early childhood education offered to all families at the market price for services.

slots citywide, low-income families had insufficient state and federally funded services available in Grand Rapids.

There was a high need for infant and toddler slots across all program types, but especially for Early Head Start. With no providers available, all 3,125 children in need of care were without slots in licensed or registered providers. Both market rate care and subsidized care also require many additional slots for birth to 2-year-olds.

In market rate care and the Great Start Readiness Program, children ages three to five were being served at a high level – 100 percent and 80 percent respectively. The majority of Grand Rapids families likely could not afford market rates

Table 8: Citywide Demand and Service by Program Type*

	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	5,304	844	-4,460	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	6,400	6,811	411	106%
Subsidized Care (CDC)				
0-2-Year-Olds	1,402	295	-1,107	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	2,037	320	-1,717	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	3,125	0	-3,125	0%
Head Start	2,726	780	-1,946	29%
Pre-K Subsidy Programs				
Great Start Readiness Program	1,705	1,369	-336	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	3,462	549	-2,913	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	4,780	4,766	-14	100%

**The numbers in this table do not sum to the overall demand and service gap numbers. This is due to overlap where children are eligible for and counted in demand for multiple programs. For the overall numbers, each Federal Poverty Level range is only counted once.*

services. Though there are slots available, it was only with financial difficult that parents were able to access them.

The Highland-Park Belknap Lookout and Creston neighborhoods are ranked ninth and tenth overall. Yet, these neighborhoods had large service gaps in some categories. Both had a high density of poverty and therefore require more state and federally funded programs, including GSRP. The programmatic analysis presented here demonstrates the different needs of neighborhoods and the necessity to look at each individually.

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SUBSIDIZED CARE

Subsidized care refers to early childhood education services for families who qualify for assistance through Michigan's Child Development and Care Program (CDC). Assistance is provided by the federal government and administered through Michigan's Department of Human Services. Eligibility for subsidized care is determined by parents' income, 121 percent Federal Poverty Level in 2016, as well as requirements that parents are working or attending school. Qualifying families who are able to place their children with approved providers receive partial or full reimbursement of the cost of care.

The demand, supply, service gap, and service level for subsidized care and education by each age group are presented in Table 9. In order to present the most accurate information of supply, this report uses data on the number of Grand Rapids children in licensed and registered providers who received CDC funding. Over 80 percent of children eligible for subsidized care did not have access to licensed and registered providers in Grand Rapids.

The neighborhood rankings for subsidized care need for children ages birth to two are displayed on Map 7 and its accompanying table. There were 1,107 infants and toddlers without a subsidized care slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds receiving subsidized care was 21 percent across Grand Rapids. This was the highest service level of any program for this age group.

The highest-need areas for birth to 2-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The

Highland Park-Belknap Lookout neighborhood, however, ranked higher for this program. The neighborhood's need for subsidized care corresponds to the 70 percent of children who lived under 125 percent FPL.

Ten neighborhoods had a service level of 20 percent or below. Due to the low level of service across Grand Rapids, the neighborhood rankings mostly mirror the demands of each neighborhood. Four neighborhoods, however, even those with high demand such as Kenosha Park-Millbank, had service levels above 80 percent.

The neighborhood rankings for subsidized care need for children ages three to five are displayed on Map 8 and its accompanying table. For this group, there were 1,717 children without a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. The service level for 3- to 5-year-olds receiving subsidized care was 16 percent across Grand Rapids. This was the lowest service level by program type for this age group with about 85 percent of the population not receiving the ECE care they required.

The highest-need areas for 3- to 5-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The neighborhoods of Highland Park-Belknap Lookout and Creston, with high populations of low-income children, ranked higher for this category.

Twelve neighborhoods had a service level below 20 percent. The neighborhood rankings mostly mirror the demands of each neighborhood given the minimal service level across Grand Rapids. The neighborhoods of Kenosha Park-Millbank and Alger Heights-Shawnee Park have service levels around 60 percent.

Table 9: Subsidized Care Service Gap by Age Group

	Demand	Supply	Citywide Gap	Citywide Service Level
0-2-Year-Olds	1,402	295	-1,107	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	2,037	320	-1,717	16%

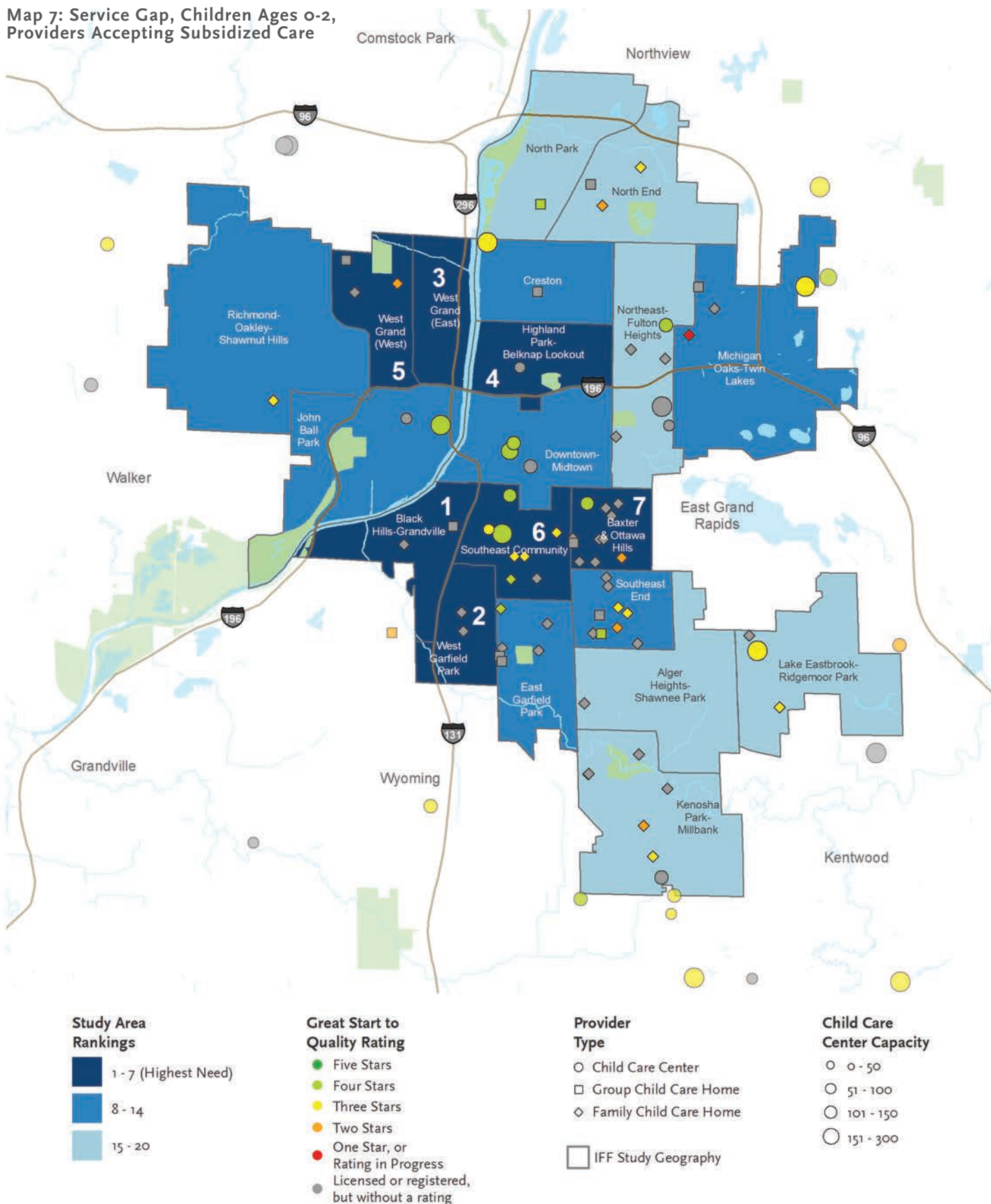
In 2016, over 100 providers stated they accepted subsidized care yet did not receive subsidy funding. The low reimbursement rates in Michigan may affect providers' interest in accepting subsidized care.

The income eligibility rate in Michigan was, and continues to be, one of the lowest in the United States.²⁶ On top of the scarcity of services, there were number of families not eligible for assistance care they need. Funding and accessibility issues led to the Michigan government to return federal early childhood education assistance funds in 2016.²⁷

Stakeholders in Grand Rapids seeking to increase the availability of subsidized care services have multiple issues to tackle at the local and state levels. Increasing the availability of services is necessary, however, the struggles providers face with the current system must be addressed. Policy changes at the state level to increase the level of funding available are also necessary across Michigan.

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Map 7: Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Providers Accepting Subsidized Care



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

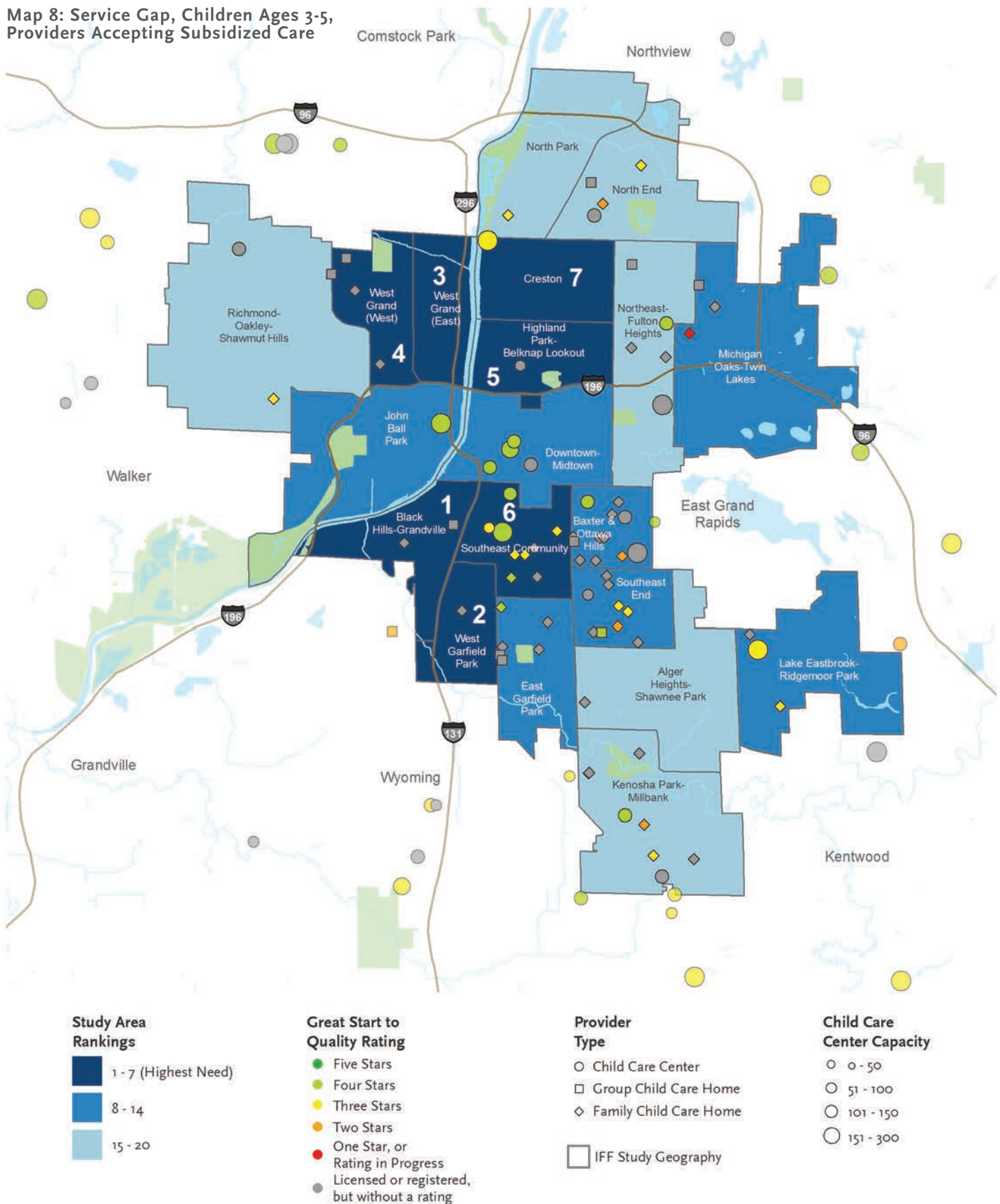
ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Table 10: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Providers Accepting Subsidized Care

Need Rank	Study Geography	Supply	Demand	Service Gap	Service Level
1	Black Hills-Grandville	143	8	-135	6%
2	West Garfield Park	127	13	-114	10%
3	West Grand (East)	117	5	-112	4%
4	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	103	6	-97	6%
5	West Grand (West)	96	5	-91	5%
6	Southeast Community	111	22	-89	20%
7	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	96	13	-83	14%
8	Creston	83	8	-75	10%
9	Downtown-Midtown	85	14	-71	16%
10	East Garfield Park	92	27	-65	29%
11	Southeast End	73	18	-55	25%
12	John Ball Park	46	7	-39	15%
13	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	32	10	-22	31%
14	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	41	19	-22	46%
15	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	34	15	-19	44%
16	Kenosha Park-Millbank	53	44	-9	83%
17	Northeast-Fulton Heights	26	19	-7	73%
18	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	26	23	-3	88%
19	North Park	12	11	-1	92%
20	North End	6	8	2	133%

Map 8: Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5, Providers Accepting Subsidized Care



ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

This study's accompanying online tool allows users to visualize provider supply and community demographic data alongside the results of the needs assessment at the city, programmatic, and neighborhood levels.

Table 11: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5, Providers Accepting Subsidized Care

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	Black Hills-Grandville	212	10	-202	5%
2	West Garfield Park	196	11	-185	6%
3	West Grand (East)	160	5	-155	3%
4	West Grand (West)	155	5	-150	3%
5	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	133	6	-127	5%
6	Southeast Community	150	25	-125	17%
7	Creston	128	7	-121	5%
8	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	123	15	-108	12%
9	East Garfield Park	127	22	-105	17%
10	Downtown-Midtown	113	19	-94	17%
11	Southeast End	98	18	-80	18%
12	John Ball Park	71	10	-61	14%
13	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	66	23	-43	35%
14	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	54	17	-37	31%
15	Kenosha Park-Millbank	85	50	-35	59%
16	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	49	17	-32	35%
17	Northeast-Fulton Heights	44	19	-25	43%
18	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	42	25	-17	60%
19	North Park	20	8	-12	40%
20	North End	11	8	-3	73%

EARLY HEAD START AND HEAD START

Head Start and Early Head Start are federal early childhood education programs. In Grand Rapids, federal funding is dispersed through Head Start for Kent County, the local grantee. Families are eligible, according to federal regulations, if their incomes are at or lower than the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Head Start services were created to meet the early care needs of high-risk, low-income families and children. Services are provided for children and families including early education, health care, nutritious meals, parent education, and housing.²⁸ Vulnerable populations rely on Early Head Start and Head Start services to prepare their children for school and provide vital services.

The demand, supply, service gap, and service level for Early Head Start and Head Start are presented in Table 12. In order to present the most accurate information of supply, this report uses data on the number of Grand Rapids children attending Head Start. The three to five age group had a service level of 29 percent and there were no Early Head Start slots for birth to 2-year-olds in Grand Rapids.

The neighborhood rankings for Early Head Start are displayed on Map 9 and its accompanying table. With a service level of zero across Grand Rapids, all 3,125 infants and toddlers in need of a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider.²⁹

The highest-need areas for birth to 2-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The Downtown-Midtown neighborhood is ranked fifth in this

category, despite ranking eleventh overall. Generally, this neighborhood lacked services for infants and toddlers.

The highest-need neighborhoods listed on this map are priority areas for new Early Head Start investments. Given that there are no providers serving the Early Head Start population, these rankings replicate the population of birth to 2-year-olds with families living below the Federal Poverty Level.

In 2017, eighty-eight Early Head Start slots were established through the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership program. There are also some Early Head Start services provided to families in their homes. This effort by stakeholders should continue to build upon the work being done.

The neighborhood rankings for Head Start are displayed on Map 10 and its accompanying table. For this group, there were 1,346 children in need of a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. The service level for 3- to 5-year-olds receiving Head Start care was 29 percent across Grand Rapids.

The insufficient amount of Head Start slots is particularly detrimental for 3-year-olds in low-income families. The Great Start Readiness Program had high service levels, but only provides services for 4-year-olds. Head Start and subsidized care offer services to low-income 3-year-olds, but had service levels below 30 percent.

There have been issues across programs in Grand Rapids in the past with a lack of coordination and an overuse of waitlists.³⁰ Given the overlap children in need of care and strict program requirements, providers may become competitive across programs.

Table 12: Early Head Start and Head Start Service Gap

	Demand	Supply	Citywide Gap	Citywide Service Level
Early Head Start	3,125	0	-3,125	0%
Head Start	2,726	780	-1,946	29%

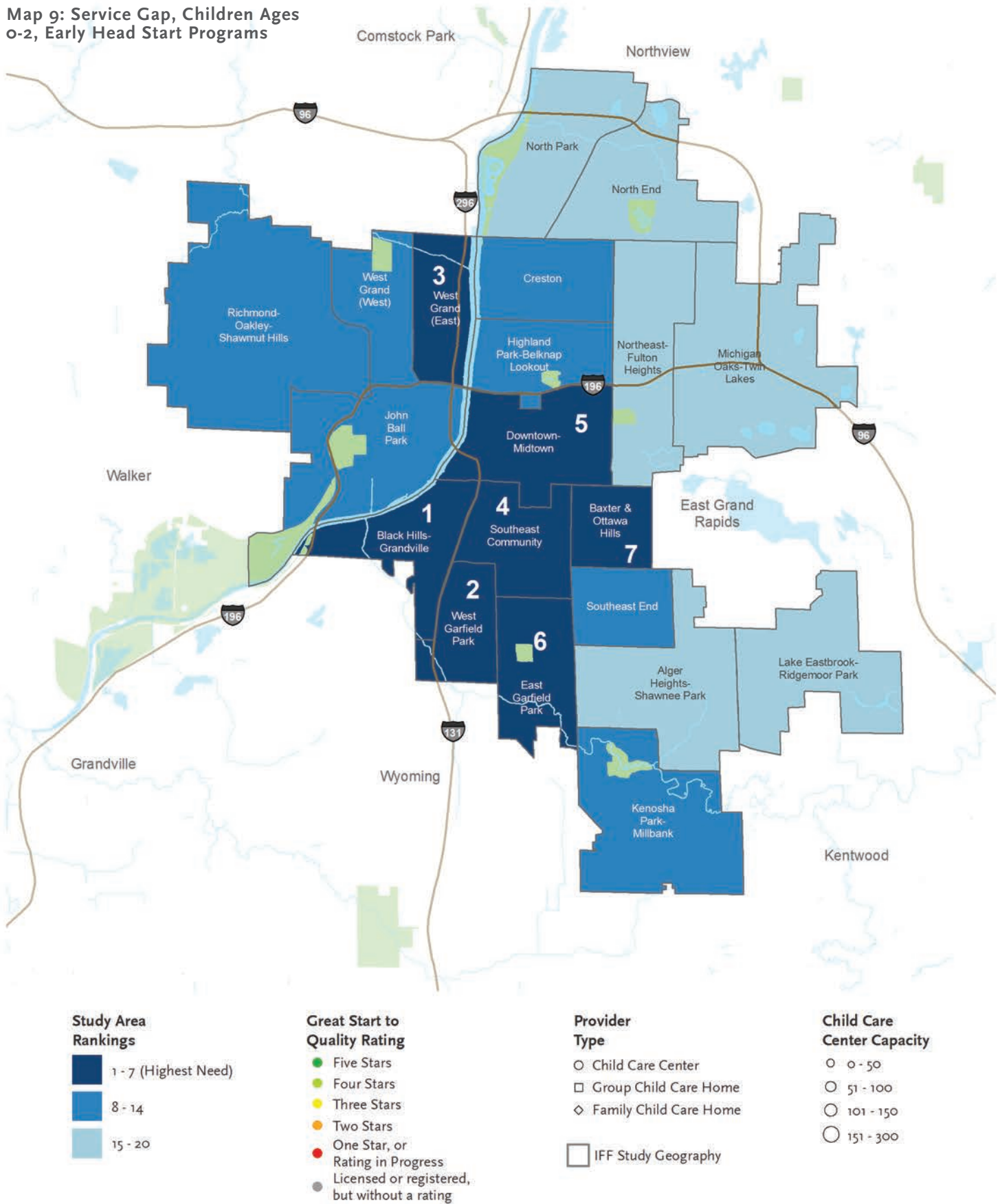
Stakeholders in Grand Rapids have worked to improve coordination between programs by providing a joint registration website and phone number. The focus must be the needs of children and families rather than funding issues, so stakeholders should examine inter-program concerns further.

The highest-need areas for 3- to 5-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The Highland Park-Belknap Lookout neighborhood had a higher ranking in this category with a greater need for state and federally funded programs generally.

Ten neighborhoods have a service level of 30 percent or below. Due to the limited supply of Head Start slots, the rankings largely reflect the number of eligible children living in each area. The service level for Head Start is below 55 percent for every Grand Rapids neighborhood except Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park, which has an oversupply of two slots. The neighborhoods of Kenosha Park-Millbank and Southeast Community, however, also had high demand and service levels above 50 percent.

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Map 9: Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Early Head Start Programs



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

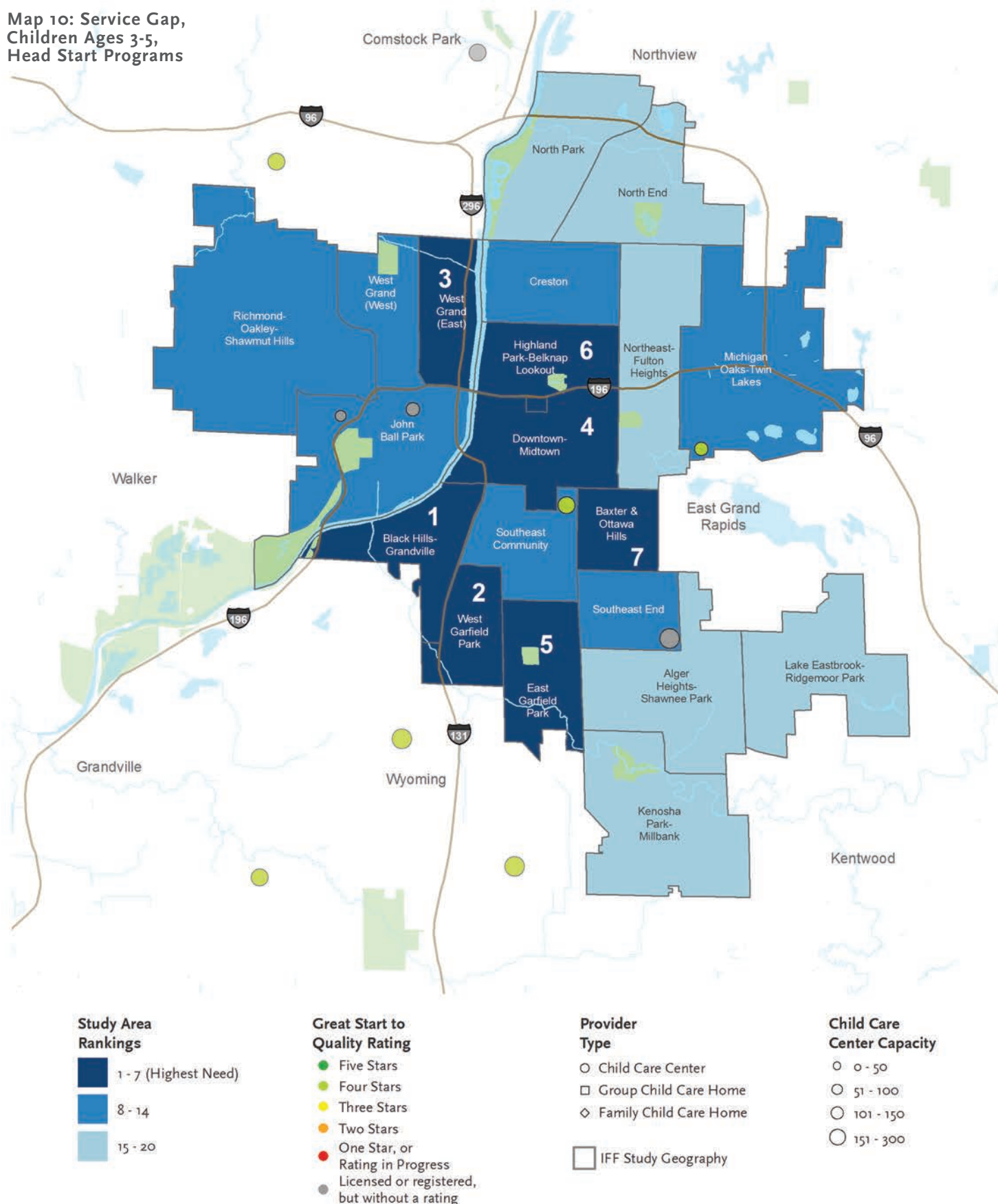
ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

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Table 13: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Early Head Start Programs

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	Black Hills-Grandville	361	0	-361	0%
2	West Garfield Park	349	0	-349	0%
3	West Grand (East)	254	0	-254	0%
4	Southeast Community	238	0	-238	0%
5	Downtown-Midtown	230	0	-230	0%
6	East Garfield Park	208	0	-208	0%
7	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	194	0	-194	0%
8	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	187	0	-187	0%
9	Creston	163	0	-163	0%
10	Southeast End	151	0	-151	0%
11	John Ball Park	127	0	-127	0%
12	West Grand (West)	126	0	-126	0%
13	Kenosha Park-Millbank	124	0	-124	0%
14	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	97	0	-97	0%
15	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	76	0	-76	0%
16	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	72	0	-72	0%
17	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	67	0	-67	0%
18	Northeast-Fulton Heights	63	0	-63	0%
19	North End	19	0	-19	0%
20	North Park	19	0	-19	0%

Map 10: Service Gap,
Children Ages 3-5,
Head Start Programs



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

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Table 14: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5, Head Start Programs

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	Black Hills-Grandville	330	44	-286	13%
2	West Garfield Park	319	68	-251	21%
3	West Grand (East)	216	21	-195	10%
4	Downtown-Midtown	171	28	-143	16%
5	East Garfield Park	184	55	-129	30%
6	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	150	29	-121	19%
7	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	163	57	-106	35%
8	Creston	142	37	-105	26%
9	Southeast Community	199	102	-97	51%
10	West Grand (West)	131	46	-85	35%
11	Southeast End	130	47	-83	36%
12	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	78	6	-72	8%
13	John Ball Park	114	52	-62	46%
14	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	76	20	-56	26%
15	Kenosha Park-Millbank	112	59	-53	53%
16	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	60	21	-39	35%
17	Northeast-Fulton Heights	54	17	-37	31%
18	North End	18	3	-15	17%
19	North Park	19	6	-13	32%
20	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	60	62	2	103%

GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) serves 4-year-old children in families with income levels up to 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).³¹ Michigan developed this state-funded preschool program for 4-year-olds who are at risk of low educational attainment. Funds are distributed from the state to local school districts with Grand Rapids programs operated during the school-day and school-year in Kent County schools.

GSRP not only prepares children for kindergarten, but former GSRP students also have higher high school graduation rates.³² Many children are being served and at a consistently high quality with requirements that providers achieve a 3 star Great Start to Quality rating or higher. The Great Start Readiness Program has been an overwhelming success for children in Grand Rapids and across Michigan.

The demand, supply, service gap, and service level for the Great Start Readiness Program are presented in Table 15. In order to present the most accurate information of supply, this report uses data on the number of Grand Rapids children attending GSRP. The service level for GSRP was 80 percent, with only market rate care for 3- to 5-year-olds attaining a higher level. There were available slots for almost 1,400 4-year-olds.

The neighborhood rankings for GSRP are displayed on Map 11 and its accompanying table. There was a service gap of 336 children without a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. Despite the high service level, there were some neighborhoods with insufficient slots available.

The highest-need areas for 3- to 5-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The neighborhoods of Creston and Highland Park-Belknap Lookout had a higher ranking for GSRP. The populations of these areas had higher levels of poverty and therefore a greater need for this program.

Seven neighborhoods in Grand Rapids had an oversupply of GSRP slots with 200 slots above the demand in those areas. Though often unfeasible, some families may be able to transport their children to areas with greater availability. In some cases, transportation may be convenient if parents or caregivers work nearby. It is likely many people work in the Downtown area, so it could be a potential area of focus for stakeholders.

This surplus should not diminish the need for children and families to have services available at a convenient location. Transportation is an option for some families, but can place an unnecessary burden on parents and children. Even with some areas having excess slots, there were not enough services available to served all eligible 4-year-olds.

Despite the quality care provided by GSRP to 4-year-olds, 3-year-olds in Grand Rapids were likely overlooked.³³ Families below 250 percent FPL struggle to afford market rate care and many families below 100 percent FPL could not access Head Start slots. Evidence from parents and providers suggests Grand Rapids had an overall shortage of slots for 3-year-old.

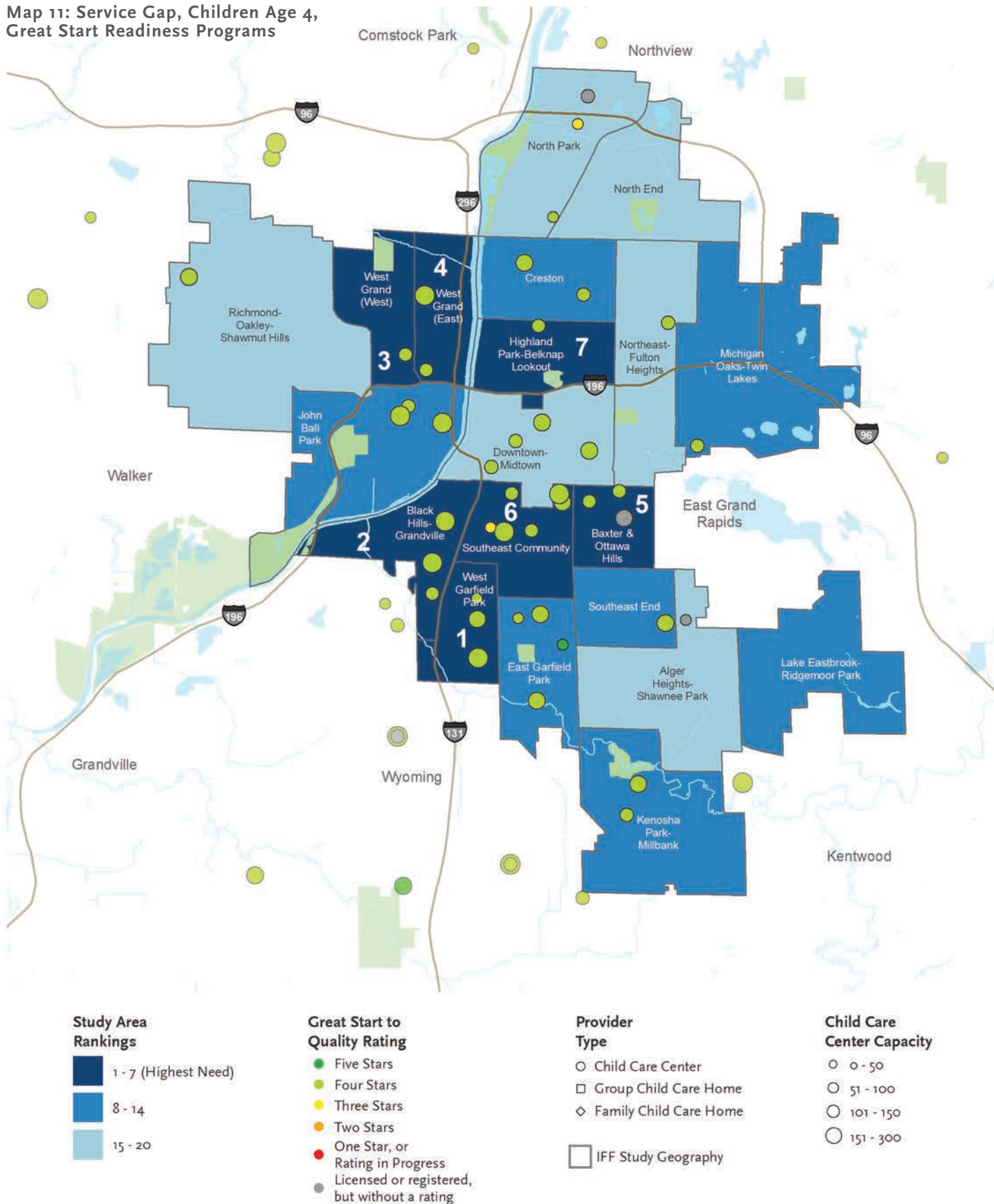
Table 15: Great Start Readiness Program Service Gap

	Demand	Supply	Citywide Gap	Citywide Service Level
Great Start Readiness Program	1,705	1,369	-336	80%

Grand Rapids stakeholders have recognized the issues that can arise from this overlap of eligible children, including an overuse of waitlists. Strategies have developed to foster coordination between GSRP and Head Start providers. These include coordinating registration for both services across Kent County. Cross-program relationships should continue to be addressed, so that providers focus on the needs of children and families.

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Map 11: Service Gap, Children Age 4, Great Start Readiness Programs



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016; US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates; Michigan Department of Human Services; Michigan Department of Education; Great Start Collaborative; Kent County; Great Start to Quality; City of Grand Rapids.

ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

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Table 16: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Age 4, Great Start Readiness Programs

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	West Garfield Park	179	71	-108	40%
2	Black Hills-Grandville	160	78	-82	49%
3	West Grand (West)	119	42	-77	35%
4	West Grand (East)	111	43	-68	39%
5	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	88	45	-43	51%
6	Southeast Community	134	93	-41	69%
7	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	88	55	-33	63%
8	Creston	81	49	-32	60%
9	Southeast End	86	64	-22	74%
10	East Garfield Park	90	76	-14	84%
11	Kenosha Park-Millbank	99	90	-9	91%
12	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	36	32	-4	89%
13	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	53	50	-3	94%
14	John Ball Park	96	97	1	101%
15	North End	21	27	6	129%
16	Downtown-Midtown	84	99	15	118%
17	Northeast-Fulton Heights	38	56	18	147%
18	North Park	36	56	20	156%
19	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	53	115	62	217%
20	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	53	131	78	247%

MARKET RATE CARE

Market rate care refers to early childhood education for families not participating in state and federally funded programs, either because they are not eligible or they do not have access to those services. Providers of market rate care often do not accept any form of state or federal reimbursement for services. Some market rate providers state they accept subsidized care, yet did not receive any funds from the CDC in 2016.

All families in Grand Rapids have access to market rate care and it had the most available supply. Only families with incomes above 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Level are likely to be able to comfortably afford market rate early childhood education services.³⁴ A number of families that are not grant eligible, above 121 percent FPL in Michigan in 2016, and below 400 percent FPL struggled to afford market rate care.³⁵

The demand, supply, service gap, and service level for market rate care and education by each age group are presented in Table 17. Without accurate child-level data for each provider in Grand Rapids, supply estimates are based on provider capacity, which likely overestimates the actual number of children served. As in all programs, the service level was higher for 3- to 5-year-olds. The service levels for market rate care were the highest across programs for both age groups.

The neighborhood rankings for market rate care need for children ages birth to two are displayed on Map 12 and its accompanying table. For market rate care, there were 2,913 infants and toddlers without a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. The service level for birth to

2-year-olds for market rate care was 16 percent across Grand Rapids. This left over 80 percent of Grand Rapids infant and toddlers unable to access the market rate care they required.

The highest-need neighborhoods for birth to 2-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The neighborhoods of Southeast End and Downtown-Midtown had a higher ranking for this category. These neighborhoods had less concentration of poverty than Grand Rapids overall. Downtown-Midtown had one of the highest populations of young children, 25 percent, living over 400 percent FPL. Given the lower populations of state and federally eligible children, market rate care was in greater demand in these neighborhoods.

The highest service level for birth to 2-year-old market rate care was 49 percent in the Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes neighborhood. There were 11 neighborhoods with a service level at or below 15 percent. There were ECE slots available for less than one in five infants and toddlers Grand Rapids, and in most neighborhoods, even less had access to services in licensed or registered providers.

The neighborhood rankings for market rate care need for children ages three to five are displayed on Map 13 and its accompanying table. For this age group, there were just 14 children without a slot with a licensed or registered ECE provider. The service level for 3- to 5-year-olds for market rate care was essentially 100 percent across Grand Rapids.

ECE providers in Grand Rapids were generally meeting the market rate needs for 3- to 5-year-olds, though some neighborhoods lacked quality providers. Only nine percent of families were likely to be able to afford this type of care.

Table 17: Market Rate Care Service Gap

	Demand	Supply	Citywide Gap	Citywide Service Level
0-2-Year-Olds	3,462	549	-2,913	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	4,780	4,766	-14	100%

Despite availability of slots for these children, it is unclear if or how they would be able to pay for these services.

The highest-need areas for 3- to 5-year-old care are numbered on the map and largely match the neighborhoods with the highest overall ECE needs. The Creston neighborhood actually had greater need for state and federally funded programs, but ranks higher since the service level for this category was high across Grand Rapids. The Southeast End neighborhood also had a higher ranking in this category arising from insufficient services for its majority of young children living between 125 percent and 400 percent FPL.

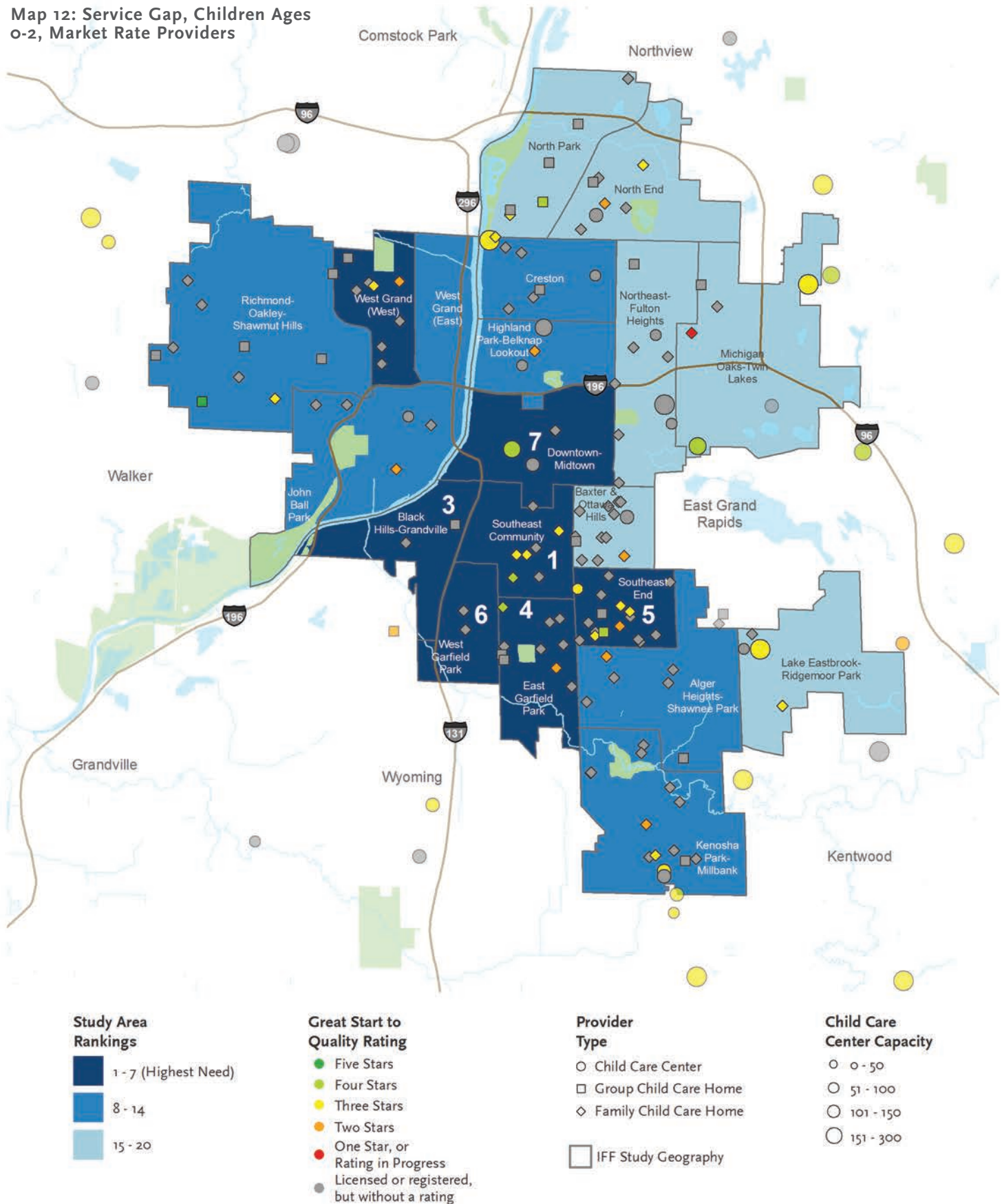
Half of the neighborhoods in Grand Rapids had an oversupply of market rate slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with 651 above the demand in those ten areas. Stakeholders could investigate surplus supply and commute patterns further and may look at the Downtown area as an area to focus given the large population who works in the area. Potential partnerships with the business community could help to increase the services available where parents work.

There remained a service gap of 679 slots in 11 neighborhoods. Many of the neighborhoods with the highest-need were also the areas with the highest levels of poverty. It is likely unfeasible for families to transport their children across Grand Rapids to access care, which they often cannot afford.

Families should have available services in a convenient location and be able to access services they can afford. Increasing providers in neighborhoods lacking services remains important. Additional slots will be inadequate if the affordability of ECE services is not addressed.

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Map 12: Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Market Rate Providers

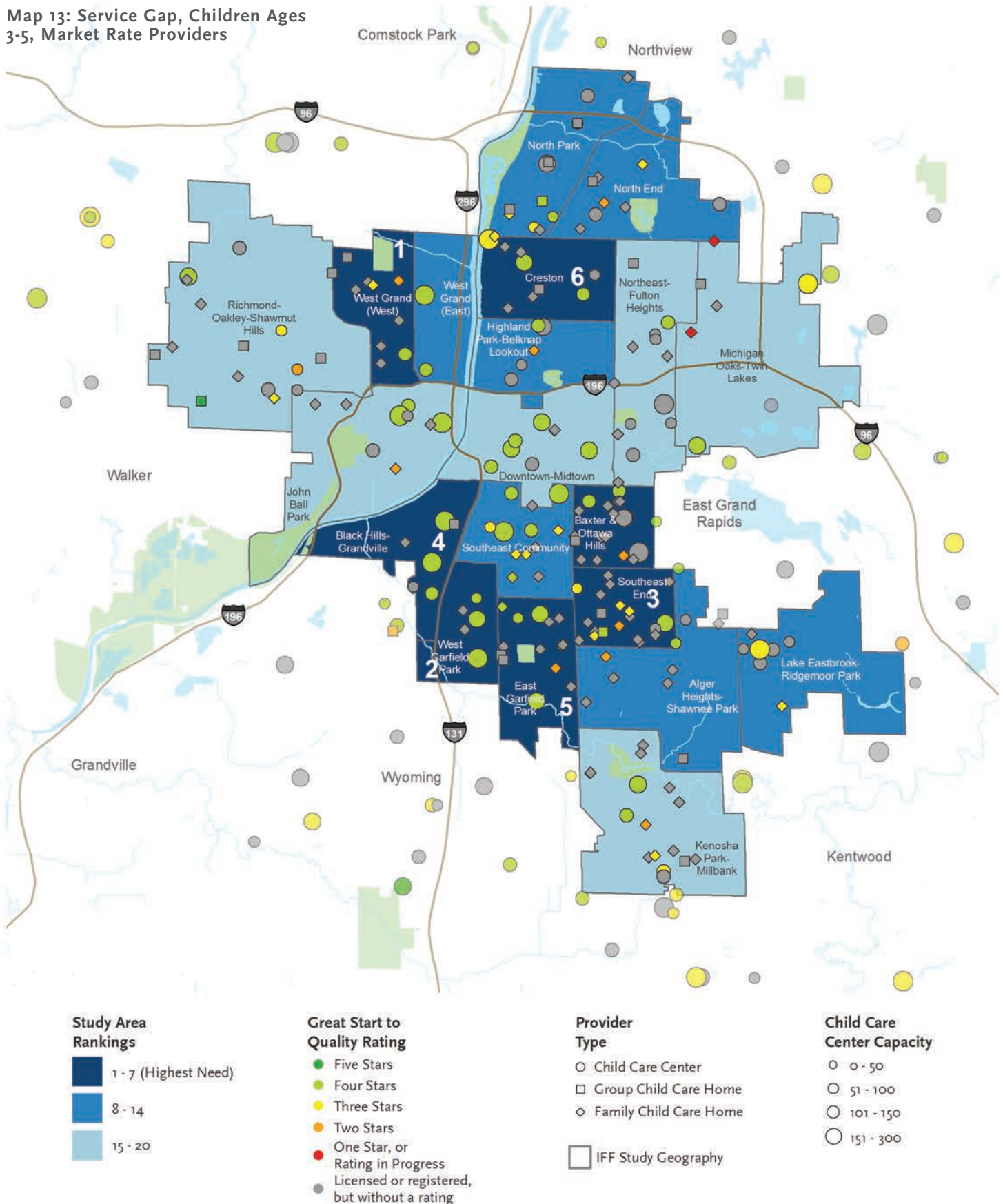


ACCESS INTERACTIVE DATA AT: www.iff.org/SystemForAllChildren

Table 18: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 0-2, Market Rate Providers

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	West Grand (West)	230	16	-214	7%
2	Southeast Community	230	16	-214	7%
3	Black Hills-Grandville	203	9	-194	4%
4	East Garfield Park	212	19	-193	9%
5	Southeast End	201	19	-182	9%
6	West Garfield Park	182	9	-173	5%
7	Downtown-Midtown	198	29	-169	15%
8	West Grand (East)	179	14	-165	8%
9	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	206	46	-160	22%
10	John Ball Park	176	17	-159	10%
11	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	175	22	-153	13%
12	Kenosha Park-Millbank	197	46	-151	23%
13	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	192	41	-151	21%
14	Creston	176	33	-143	19%
15	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	149	13	-136	9%
16	North Park	116	34	-82	29%
17	Northeast-Fulton Heights	122	43	-79	35%
18	North End	107	30	-77	28%
19	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	97	37	-60	38%
20	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	114	56	-58	49%

Map 13: Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5, Market Rate Providers



Sources: Esri Single Year Age Data 2016, US Census American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Education, Great Start Collaborative, Kent County, Great Start to Quality, City of Grand Rapids.

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Table 19: Ranking Table of Service Gap, Children Ages 3-5, Market Rate Providers

Need Rank	Study Geography	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level
1	West Grand (West)	289	135	-154	47%
2	West Garfield Park	289	176	-113	61%
3	Southeast End	224	153	-71	68%
4	Black Hills-Grandville	278	209	-69	75%
5	East Garfield Park	262	206	-56	79%
6	Creston	264	209	-55	79%
7	Baxter-Ottawa Hills	212	157	-55	74%
8	West Grand (East)	210	162	-48	77%
9	North End	184	159	-25	86%
10	Southeast Community	281	262	-19	93%
11	Highland Park-Belknap Lookout	195	202	7	104%
12	Alger Heights-Shawnee Park	293	301	8	103%
13	North Park	180	206	26	114%
14	Lake Eastbrook-Ridgemoor Park	177	213	36	120%
15	Richmond-Oakley-Shawmut Hills	248	306	58	123%
16	Northeast-Fulton Heights	212	271	59	128%
17	Kenosha Park-Millbank	296	357	61	121%
18	John Ball Park	255	354	99	139%
19	Downtown-Midtown	258	403	145	156%
20	Michigan Oaks-Twin Lakes	173	325	152	188%

RECOMMENDATIONS

A System for All Children: An Early Childhood Education Needs Assessment in Grand Rapids examined the state of Grand Rapids' ECE system in 2016. Spatial and programmatic analysis revealed the scarcity of services available for low-income communities and infants and toddlers across Grand Rapids.

This report emphasizes the programs and neighborhoods requiring the greatest additional services. The practical recommendations listed here offer suggestions that build upon the successes of the community in order to provide a comprehensive, equitable, and high-quality system to all children in Grand Rapids.

Increase the services available for children birth to 2-years-old through Early Head Start and other infant and toddler care options.

This age group often has lower demands on the formal ECE system, yet there was a critical shortage of available slots in Grand Rapids. While some families access informal care through families, friends, and neighbors, there were over 4,000 infants and toddlers without available slots. Most of the need was in low-income communities.

Both children and families receive extensive benefits through ECE services for birth to 2-year-olds. Many parents struggle to return to the workforce if services are unavailable. Recognizing the relationship between early childhood education and the workforce may help to heighten the importance of these services in Grand Rapids.

Early Head Start, a program that provides vital services along with early education, had no services available in licensed or registered providers in Grand Rapids. Establishing Early Head Start providers in the

neighborhoods with the highest demand is crucial.

Importantly, this work has already begun with new Early Head Start slots available in 2017. Given the extensive need for all birth to 2-year-old services, stakeholders should develop a comprehensive strategy to address the demands across Grand Rapids.

Focus investments for expanded supply in the highest-need neighborhoods.

Over two-thirds of early childhood education need was in one-third of Grand Rapids neighborhoods, which also had higher levels of poverty. Based on the concentration of need in these seven neighborhoods, investments in these areas would reach the largest number of children. Given the prevalence of low-income families in these neighborhoods, stakeholders should focus on increasing state and federally funded programs.

The detailed profiles in this report are designed to assist Grand Rapids stakeholders and policymakers in determining the best strategy by taking into account the specific needs and culture of each neighborhood. Culturally competent providers will work with the communities they serve to ensure the services they offer meet the needs of children and families.

Concentrating on the requirements of the highest-need neighborhoods is the priority. Resourceful stakeholders will assess the surrounding areas as they may offer different sources of funding and ways to serve the community.

Create a comprehensive plan for early childhood education programs based on the needs of each neighborhood.

In order to provide ECE services for Grand Rapids, stakeholders must assess the different needs and circumstances of the area. Each state, city, and neighborhood has unique and particular requirements. Successful stakeholders will work together with the communities they serve and take into incomes, environments, and values of these families.

A comprehensive plan should place the needs of children first, but should also consider the parents and families of those children. Many families, especially working and single parents, require access to full-day, full-year ECE services. Without access to care for their children, parents often face the difficult decision of whether working is feasible. ECE advocates could work with employers to coordinate plans for working parents and encourage workforce growth.

Cross-programmatic collaboration can help to create comprehensive care, especially for those eligible for state and federally funded programs. Low-income families often need to be strategic and creative in acquiring the services they need. Stakeholders can support these families by assisting families and providers in accessing funding and increasing awareness of what funds are available.

Continue to support efforts to improve the quality of services by helping providers with professional development and business management.

There is a growing consensus of what determines the quality of ECE services. Providers must strive to meet curricula, teacher, and facility standards. The current Great Start to Quality rating system in Michigan provides a means to assess the quality of providers, but the majority of providers did not participate. Many providers

highlighted the issues of participation along with the high costs of meeting GSQ standards.

Given the lack of involvement, the difficulties providers mention should be addressed. Stakeholders can support providers in achieving quality through professional development and business management. Supporting providers with access to training on quality care as well as business management would increase quality and stability in the ECE system.

Blending and braiding are techniques that can help providers offer high-quality, full-day, full-year services to low-income children. These methods have the potential to diversify funding and clientele for providers, while also increasing services and quality for children. Accessing any state or federally funded revenue is a complex process. Stakeholders can offer support to providers in navigating the different administrative structures and requirements.

Grand Rapids requires important yet manageable developments to create a system that can serve all families effectively. *A System for All Children* highlights key areas for investment with a focus on low-income families and services for infants and toddlers. Creating a comprehensive, inclusive, and equitable early childhood education system will serve the needs of children, families, and the community.

FINDINGS BY

THE HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOODS

To maximize the impact of reform efforts, *A System for All Children* identifies the highest-need neighborhoods where focused strategies and investments would reach the greatest number of young children. In order to serve all demand for ECE services, Grand Rapids needs 4,049 additional slots in licensed or registered centers and homes. Over two-thirds of this need (2,899 slots) was concentrated in one-third of the neighborhoods.

These rankings do not discount the needs of any community, however great or small. The seven neighborhoods discussed here require additional slots, others require higher levels of quality, and some neighborhoods require both. This section looks at each of the highest-need neighborhoods individually to better understand and highlight their unique culture and specific circumstances.

The top seven neighborhoods have large ECE needs

across all program types. A few rank lower in some categories, yet overall these neighborhoods were the highest in terms of need for all programs and age groups. The rankings of the highest-need neighborhoods for each program type are presented in Table 20. The approach to addressing these needs should engage community culture and contexts.

Across Grand Rapids, the early childhood education services for the birth to 2-year-old age group were insufficient to meet the needs of children and families. With the overall shortage of services available, the service gap rankings for this age group reflect neighborhood populations of infants and toddlers.

The service level for 3- to 5-year-olds was much lower in many of the highest-need neighborhoods than service levels citywide. The service level for the Great Start Readiness Program in many of these neighborhoods,

Table 20: Program Rankings for the Top 7 Highest-Need Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Ages 0–2				Ages 3–5					
	Subsidized Care	Early Head Start	Market Rate	Overall	Subsidized Care	Head Start	Great Start Readiness Program	Market Rate	Overall	Final Overall Rank
West Garfield Park	2	2	6	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
Black Hills-Grandville	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	4	3	2
West Grand (East)	3	3	8	4	3	3	4	8	4	3
West Grand (West)	5	12	1	8	4	10	3	1	2	4
Baxter-Ottawa Hills	7	7	15	7	8	7	5	6	5	5
East Garfield Park	10	6	4	6	9	5	10	5	8	6
Southeast Community	6	4	1	3	6	9	6	10	11	7

Table 21: Demand and Service by Program Type in the Highest-Need Neighborhoods

	Demand	Supply	Service Gap	Service Level	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education					
0-2-Year-Olds	2,406	189	-2,217	8%	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	2,714	2,032	-682	75%	106%
Subsidized Care (CDC)					
0-2-Year-Olds	782	93	-689	12%	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	1,123	93	-1,030	8%	16%
Head Start					
Early Head Start	1,730	0	-1,730	0%	0%
Head Start	1,542	393	-1,149	25%	29%
Pre-K Subsidy Programs					
Great Start Readiness Program	881	448	-433	51%	80%
Market Rate Care					
0-2-Year-Olds	1,385	96	-1,289	7%	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	1,821	1,307	-514	72%	100%

despite overall success in the city, was less than half of the citywide service level.

The demand and service by program type for the highest-need neighborhoods are displayed in Table 21. Five out of seven of the highest-need neighborhoods in Grand Rapids also had the highest levels of poverty in the city. Given their demographic composition, these neighborhoods had the greatest demand for Head Start, Early Head Start, and subsidized care for both age groups.

In the other two neighborhoods, the percent of children living under 125 percent Federal Poverty Level more closely resembled Grand Rapids overall, though was still slightly higher. Given the population in these neighborhoods, there were more children in need market

rate care than subsidy programs (not including Early Head Start).

Services for state and federally funded programs must be emphasized given their low service level and the great need in these low-income areas. For Early Head Start, Head Start, and subsidized care for both age groups, these neighborhoods account for around 40 percent of the total service gap in Grand Rapids. The service gap increases to around half for the overall and market rate care for infants and toddlers.

The highest-need neighborhoods in Grand Rapids had lower service levels even for programs performing well citywide. Market care for 3- to 5-year-olds and the Great Start Readiness Program had much lower supply in these communities. Some neighborhoods had a surplus of

slots available, but these seven neighborhoods lacked the services they required.

The neighborhood profiles presented here attempt to examine the distinct circumstances in each to guide community planning. In order to best serve the needs of a community and facilitate access for families, cultural competency is essential. These profiles serve as a starting place rather than a complete overview of the particular context of each neighborhood. Further consideration and local input are needed to determine the best strategies to improve ECE services across Grand Rapids.

**SECTION
CONTINUED
ON NEXT PAGE**

WEST GARFIELD PARK

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 1

The West Garfield Park neighborhood had the highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It also ranked first for the overall 3- to 5-year-old and the Great Start Readiness Program service gaps. The neighborhood ranked second in terms of need for almost all its program types for both age groups.

West Garfield Park's highest service level was for Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) care and market rate care for 3- to 5-year-olds. However, these services were not meeting the needs of at least 40 percent of the area's children. The highest rank the neighborhood received was sixth for market rate infant and toddler care, however, the service level for this group was at just five percent.

West Garfield Park needs greater services for 3- to 5-year-olds overall, compared to other Grand Rapids neighborhoods. The GSRP service level for the neighborhood was half of the citywide level. All other state and federally funded programs for both age groups similarly require attention in the area given the income demographics of the neighborhood and low level of slots available (21 percent or less).

Demographics

In 2016, West Garfield Park had a population of 1,058 young children, the largest in Grand Rapids. Over 69 percent of children were at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the fourth highest amount in Grand Rapids. Almost all young children, 95

Population Characteristics	West Garfield Park	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	556	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	548	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	69%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	31%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	0%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	66%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	17%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	2%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	13%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	58%	60%
Single Parent	42%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	23%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	20%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	4%	2%
Single Parent, Working	35%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	18%	10%

percent, were living below 200 percent FPL.

The majority of the West Garfield Park population was Hispanic, significantly higher than across the city overall. The household structure was similar to the statistics citywide with 42 percent of households with children under six being a single parent. Over half the families in this neighborhood were likely to require full-day, full-year care (single parents and two working parent households). Though this was less than the Grand Rapids

average of almost 70 percent likely to need full-day, full-year ECE care.

Demand

Of the 556 infants and toddlers in West Garfield Park, approximately 76 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 88 percent of the 548 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 420 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 83 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 30 percent qualified for subsidized care. For this neighborhood, Early Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service and no slots available.

Of the 480 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 66 percent qualified for Head Start, 41 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 37 percent were eligible for the GSRP. For this age group in this neighborhood, Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 43 percent of children likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 60 percent of children likely needed licensed or registered market rate care.

Supply

West Garfield Park had 22 slots for infants and toddlers and 284 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 398 infants and toddlers and 196 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they needed. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was

Demand & Supply	West Garfield Park	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	420	22
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	480	284
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	127	13
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	196	11
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	349	0
Head Start Eligible	319	68
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	179	71
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	182	9
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	289	176

five percent and 59 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was ten percentage points lower than Grand Rapids as a whole with a service level of ten percent for birth to 2-year-olds and six percent for 3- to 5-year-olds. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 21 percent, eight percentage points lower than the city average.

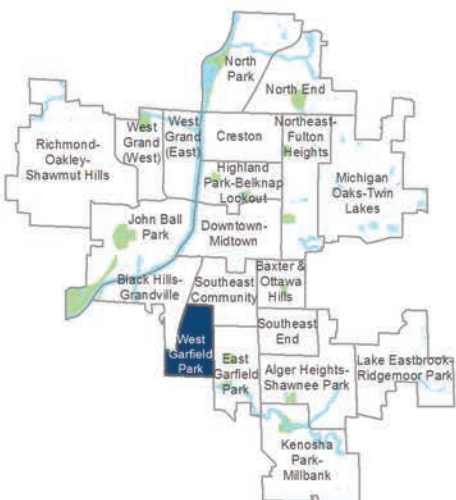
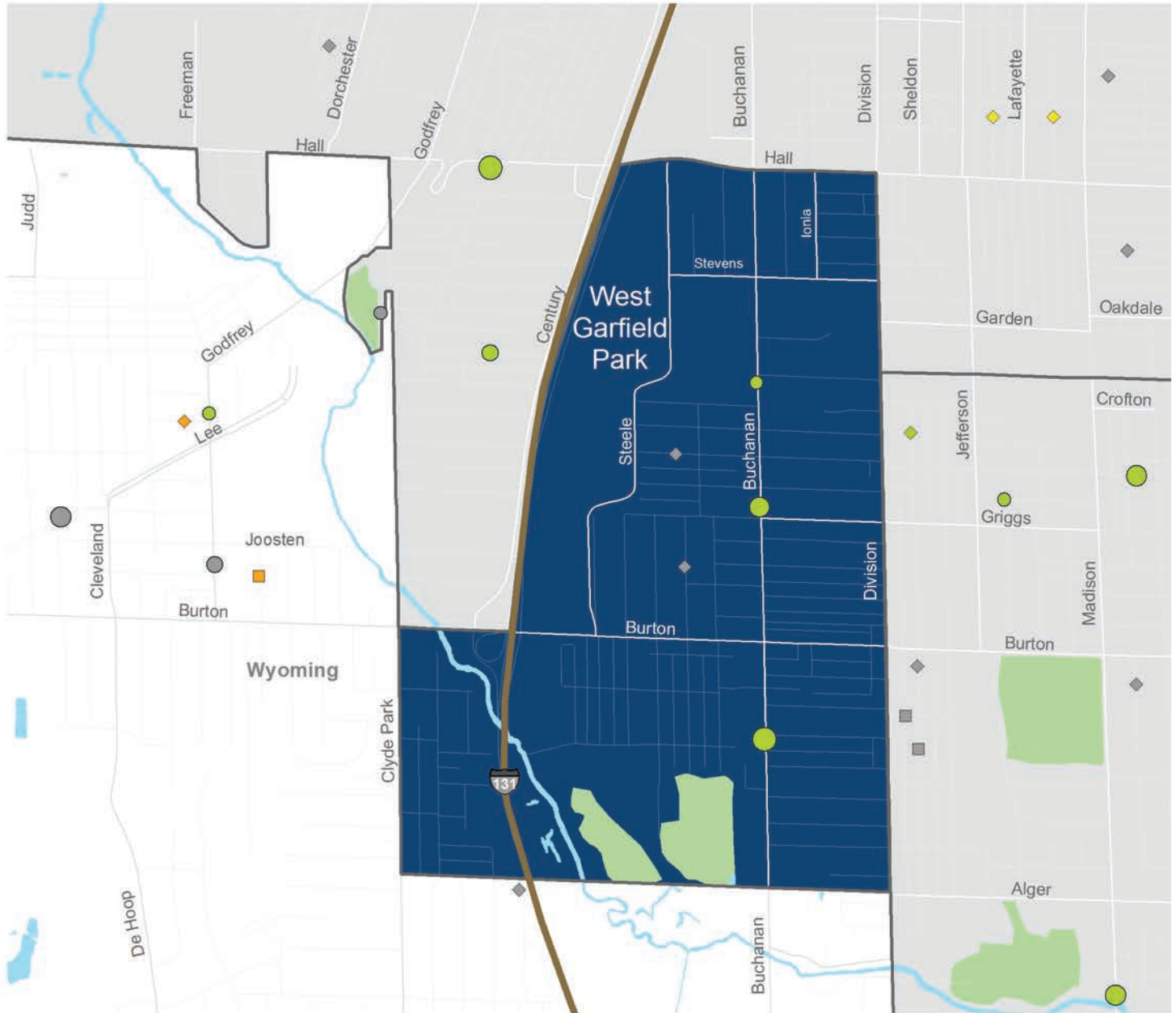
The West Garfield Park neighborhood had a service level of 40 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. Service was much lower than the citywide average of 80 percent and ranks the neighborhood first in terms of need across Grand Rapids.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 61 percent, for the neighborhood. However, it was still ranked second for the level of need, reflecting West Garfield Park's overall

Meeting the Need	West Garfield Park Gap	West Garfield Park Service Level	West Garfield Park Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-398	5%	2	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-196	59%	1	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-114	10%	2	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-185	6%	2	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-349	0%	2	0%
Head Start	-251	21%	2	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-108	40%	1	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-173	5%	6	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-113	61%	2	100%

need for ECE slots. Conversely, for the birth to 2-year-old age group, the five percent service level for market rate care in West Garfield Park was ten percentage points lower than the city average. Yet, it ranked sixth for overall need.

The licensed and registered providers in West Garfield Park who participate in the Great Start to Quality rating system were performing at a high level with most achieving a 4 star rating. Some Family and Group Child Care Home providers received a 3 or 2 star rating. There were many providers, mostly home-based care, who were not participating in GSQ in the area.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

BLACK HILLS-GRANDVILLE

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 2

The Black Hills-Grandville neighborhood had the second highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It ranked first for the overall birth to 2-year-old, subsidized care for both age groups, and both Early Head Start and Head Start service gaps. The neighborhood had a great deal of need across all programs, ranking fourth or higher in all categories.

Black Hills-Grandville had the least amount of slots available and yet the highest demand for infants and toddlers. Black Hills-Grandville's highest service level was for Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) care and the overall ECE service for 3- to 5-year-olds. These services met the needs of over 70 percent the area's children.

Similar to Grand Rapids as a whole, Black Hills-Grandville needs greater state and federally programs and services for children birth to 2-years-old. The GSRP service level for the neighborhood was just over half of the citywide level. All other state and federally funded programs for both age groups require even greater attention in the area given the income demographics of the neighborhood and low level of slots available (21 percent or less). Infants and toddlers also had very low service levels; the highest being subsidized care at just six percent.

Demographics

In 2016, Black Hills-Grandville had a population of 1,025 young children, the third largest in Grand Rapids. Over 75 percent of children were at or below the 125 percent

Population Characteristics	Black Hills-Grandville	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	516	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	509	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	75%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	25%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	0%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	73%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	16%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	1%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	9%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	41%	60%
Single Parent	59%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	16%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	17%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	2%	2%
Single Parent, Working	50%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	15%	10%

of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the highest amount in Grand Rapids.³⁶ Almost all young children, 94 percent, were living below 200 percent FPL.

The majority of the Black Hills-Grandville population was Hispanic, significantly higher than across the city overall. There were about 20 percent more single parents in the area than Grand Rapids citywide. There were also a higher number of teenage births in the Black Hills-Grandville neighborhood, 17 percent of all births, which

was 13 percentage points higher than the city average. Similar to Grand Rapids overall, about two-thirds of the families in this neighborhood were likely to require full-day, full-year care (single working parents and two working parent households).

Demand

Of the 516 infants and toddlers in Black Hills-Grandville, approximately 82 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 88 percent of the 509 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 421 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 86 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 34 percent qualified for subsidized care. For this neighborhood, Early Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service and no slots available.

Of the 448 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 74 percent qualified for Head Start, 47 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 36 percent were eligible for the GSRP. For this age group in this neighborhood, Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 48 percent of children likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 62 percent of children likely need licensed or registered market rate care.

Supply

Black Hills-Grandville had 17 slots for infants and toddlers and 320 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed

Demand & Supply	Black Hills-Grandville	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	421	17
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	448	320
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	143	8
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	212	10
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	361	0
Head Start Eligible	330	44
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	160	78
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	203	9
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	278	209

and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 404 infants and toddlers and 128 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they needed. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was four percent and 71 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

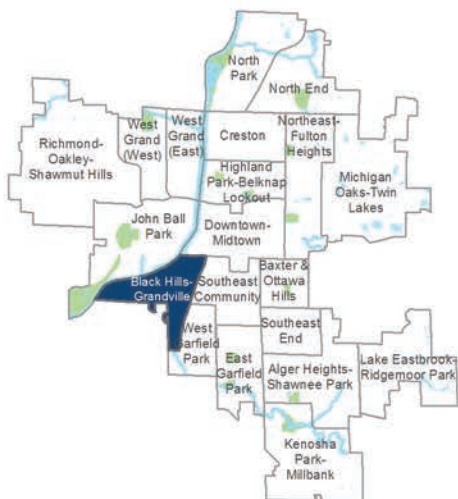
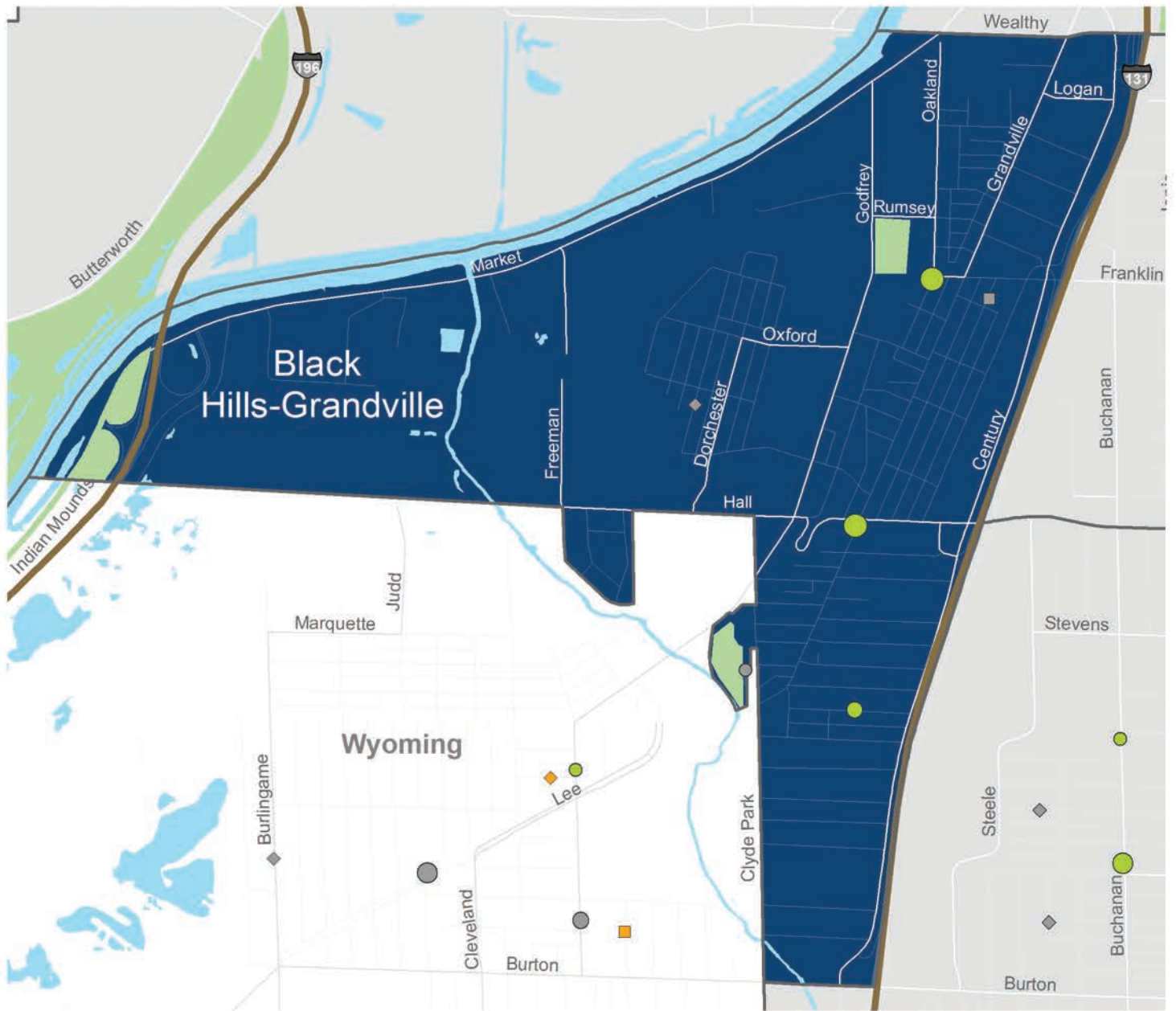
The service level for subsidized care was less than Grand Rapids as a whole with a service level of 6 percent for birth to 2-year-olds and five percent for 3- to 5-year-olds. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 13 percent, sixteen percentage points lower than the city average.

The Black Hills-Grandville neighborhood had a service level of 49 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. Service was lower than the citywide average of 80 percent and ranked the neighborhood second in terms of need across Grand Rapids.

Meeting the Need	Black Hills-Grandville Gap	Black Hills-Grandville Service Level	Black Hills-Grandville Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-404	4%	1	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-128	71%	3	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-135	6%	1	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-202	5%	1	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-361	0%	1	0%
Head Start	-286	13%	1	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-82	49%	2	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-194	4%	3	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-69	75%	4	100%

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 75 percent, for the neighborhood. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was much lower at four percent. This was over ten percentage points lower than the citywide average.

The licensed and registered providers serving Black Hills-Grandville who participated in the Great Start to Quality rating system were performing at a high level with most achieving a 4 star rating. A couple of Family and Group Child Care Home providers received a 2 star rating. About half of the area providers were not participating in GSQ.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

WEST GRAND (EAST)

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 3

The West Grand (East) neighborhood had the third highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It was ranked fourth for the overall birth to 2-year-old and overall 3- to 5-year-old service gaps. The neighborhood had a great deal of need across all state and federally funded programs, ranking fourth or higher.

West Grand (both East and West) had the lowest supply available for subsidized care for both age groups across Grand Rapids. The neighborhood also had one of the lowest service levels for the Great Start Readiness Program and Head Start. The highest rank the neighborhood received was eighth for market rate care for both age groups.

Similar to Grand Rapids as a whole, West Grand (East) needs greater state and federally funded programs. The GSRP service level for the neighborhood was less than half of the citywide level. All other state and federally funded programs for both age groups require even greater attention in the area given the income demographics of the neighborhood and low level of slots available (ten percent or less).

Demographics

In 2016, West Grand (East) had a population of 778 young children. Over 75 percent of children were at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the highest amount in Grand Rapids.³⁷ Almost all young children, 94 percent, were living below 200 percent FPL.

Population Characteristics	West Grand (East)	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	403	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	375	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	75%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	23%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	2%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	27%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	17%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	0%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	50%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	38%	60%
Single Parent	62%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	16%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	16%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	0%	2%
Single Parent, Working	58%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	10%	10%

The majority of the West Grand (East) population was Caucasian, similar to the overall city demographics. There were over 20 percentage points more single parents in the area than Grand Rapids citywide. Full-day, full-year services were a priority in the area with almost 75 percent of families likely to require these services (single working parents and two working parent households).

Demand

Of the 403 infants and toddlers in West Grand (East),

approximately 79 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 84 percent of the 375 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 318 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 80 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 37 percent qualified for subsidized care. For this neighborhood, Early Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service and no slots available.

Of the 314 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 69 percent qualified for Head Start, 51 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 35 percent were eligible for the GSRP. For this age group in this neighborhood, Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 56 percent of children likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 67 percent of children likely needed licensed or registered market rate care.

Supply

West Grand (East) had 19 slots for infants and toddlers and 218 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 299 infants and toddlers and 96 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they needed. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was six percent and 69 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was less than Grand Rapids as a whole with a service level of just four percent or below for both age groups. For Head Start, the service

Demand & Supply	West Grand (East)	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	318	19
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	314	218
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	117	5
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	160	5
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	254	0
Head Start Eligible	216	21
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	111	43
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	179	14
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	210	162

level in this neighborhood was ten percent, almost 20 percentage points lower than the city average.

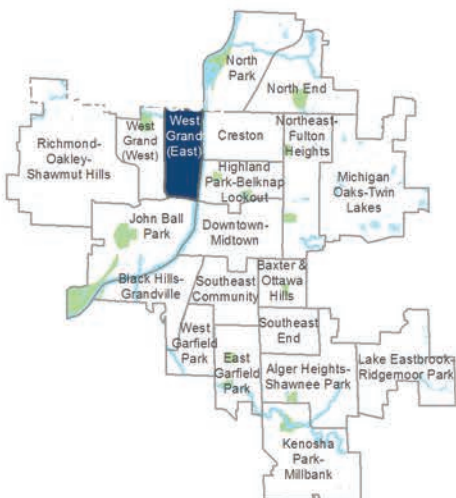
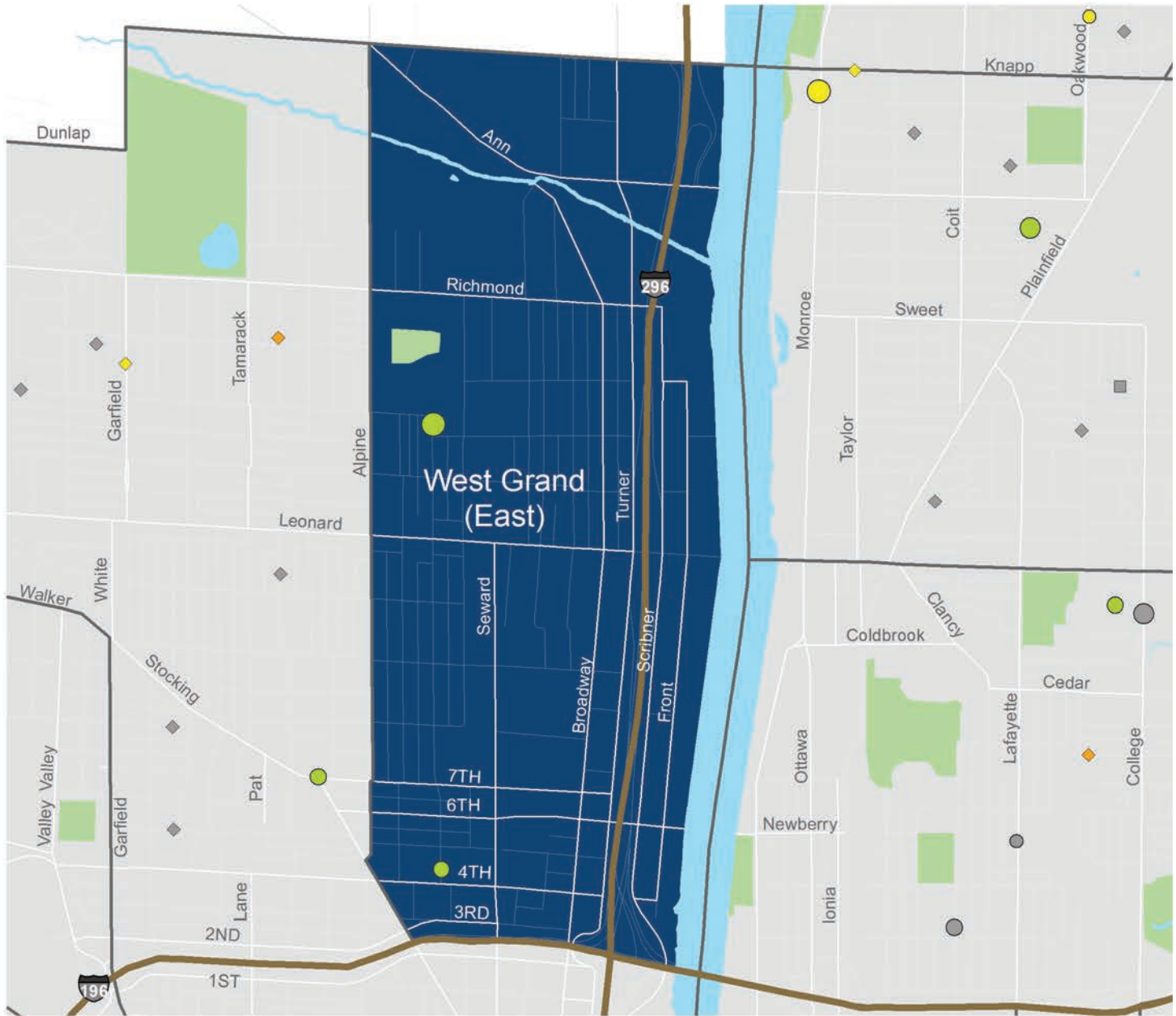
The West Grand (East) neighborhood had a service level of 39 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. Service was much lower than the citywide average of 84 percent and ranked the neighborhood fourth in terms of need across Grand Rapids.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 77 percent, for the neighborhood. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was much lower at eight percent. This was half of the citywide average.

The licensed and registered providers serving West Grand (East) who participated in the Great Start to Quality rating system, mostly center-based, were preforming at a high level with most achieving a 3 or 4 star rating. A

Meeting the Need	West Grand (East) Gap	West Grand (East) Service Level	West Grand (East) Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-299	6%	4	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-96	69%	4	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-112	4%	3	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-155	3%	3	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-254	0%	3	0%
Head Start	-195	10%	3	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-68	39%	4	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-165	8%	8	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-48	77%	8	100%

couple of Family and Group Child Care Home providers received a 2 star rating. Over half of the area providers, mostly home-based, were not participating in GSQ.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

WEST GRAND (WEST)

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 4

The West Grand (West) neighborhood had the fourth highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It ranked second for the overall 3- to 5-year-old service gap. The neighborhood also had high rankings, third, fourth, and fifth, for the service gap of the Great Start Readiness Program, subsidized care for 3- to 5-year-olds, and subsidized care for birth to 2-year-olds.

West Grand (West) ranked first for the service gap of market rate care for both age groups. The service level for this care in this neighborhood was less than half of the citywide averages. For 3- to 5-year-olds, this service level was over ten percentage points lower than any other neighborhood with West Grand (West) having the lowest supply of slots. West Grand (both East and West) had the lowest supply available for subsidized care for both age groups across Grand Rapids.

West Grand (West) had a greater demand for 3- to 5-year-olds services and market rate care, compared to Grand Rapids overall. The GSRP service level for the neighborhood was less than half of the citywide level. Over 75 percent of children were likely to need market rate care in West Grand (West) and 70 percent do not have access to licensed or registered providers.

Demographics

In 2016, West Grand (West) had a population of 921 young children. Just under half of children were at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), similar to the citywide average. Subsequently, about

Population Characteristics	West Grand (West)	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	439	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	482	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	49%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	44%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	7%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	19%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	6%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	1%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	68%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	49%	60%
Single Parent	51%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	38%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	7%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	0%	2%
Single Parent, Working	53%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	2%	10%

half of children were in families unlikely to be able to comfortably afford ECE services and yet did not qualify for state and federal assistance.

Almost 70 percent of the West Grand (West) population was Caucasian, a higher percent than across the city overall. There were slightly more single parents in the area than Grand Rapids citywide. Full-day, full-year services were a priority in the area with over 90 percent of families likely to require these services (single working parents and two working parent households).

Demand

Of the 439 infants and toddlers in West Grand (West), approximately 63 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 80 percent of the 482 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 276 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 46 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 35 percent qualified for subsidized care. Of the 384 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 34 percent qualified for Head Start, 40 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 31 percent were eligible for the GSRP.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 83 percent of children likely require market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 75 percent of children likely needed licensed or registered market rate care. For this neighborhood, market rate for both age groups had the largest number of children requiring service.

Supply

West Grand (West) had 21 slots for infants and toddlers and 210 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 255 infants and toddlers and 174 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they need. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was eight percent and 55 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was much less than Grand Rapids as a whole with a service level of five percent or less for both age groups. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 35 percent, higher than the city average.

Demand & Supply	West Grand (West)	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	276	21
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	384	210
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	96	5
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	155	5
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	126	0
Head Start Eligible	131	46
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	119	42
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	230	16
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	289	135

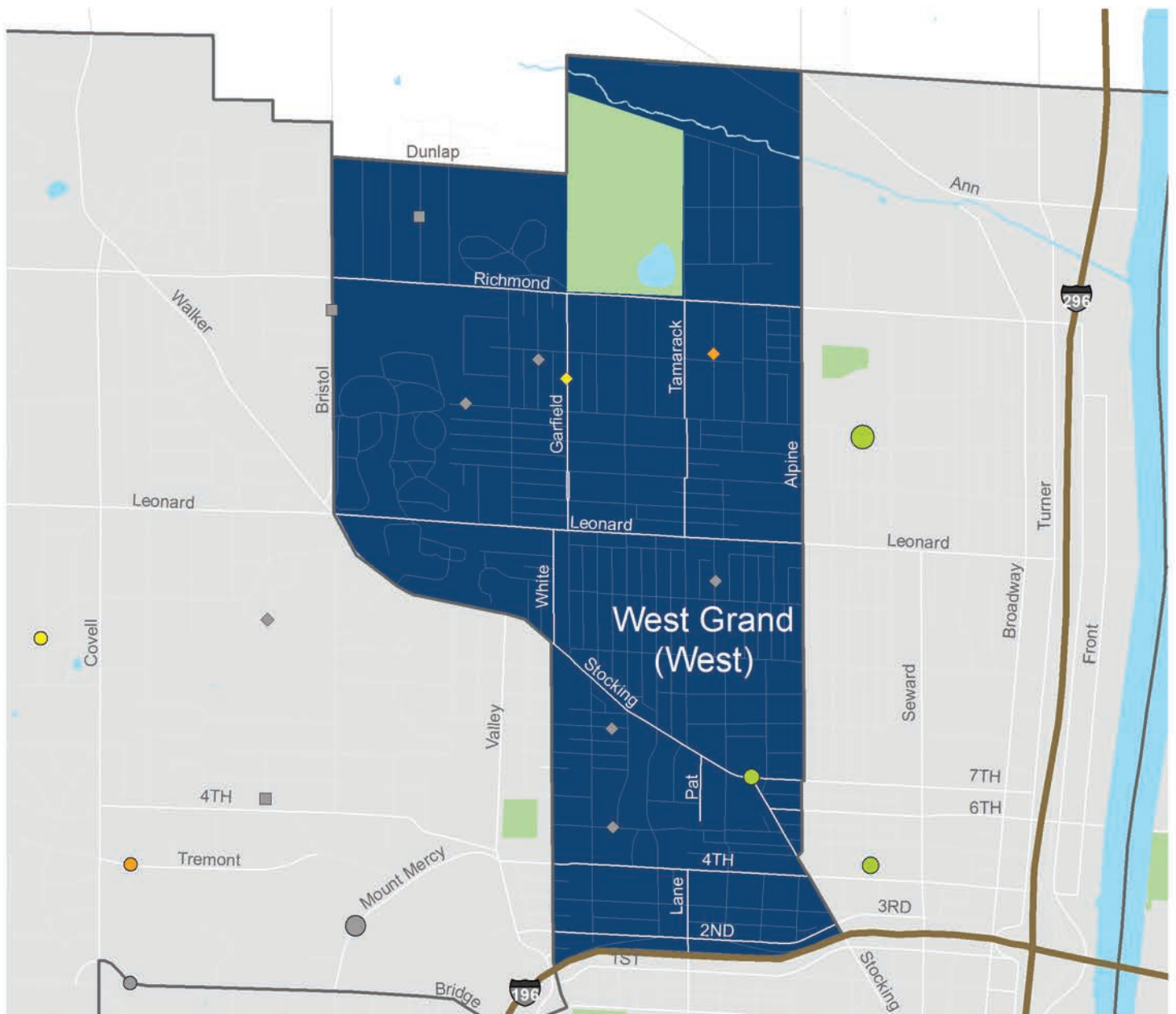
The West Grand (West) neighborhood had a service level of 35 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. Service was much lower than the citywide average of 80 percent and ranks the neighborhood third in terms of need across Grand Rapids.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 47 percent, for the neighborhood. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was lower at seven percent. For both age groups, the service level was less than half of the citywide average. West Grand (West) ranked first for market rate care for both age groups with 368 children without access to licensed or registered slots.

The licensed and registered providers serving West Grand (West) who participated in the Great Start to Quality rating system were not performing at a high level. While three center-based providers received a rating of 4 stars,

Meeting the Need	West Grand (West) Gap	West Grand (West) Service Level	West Grand (West) Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-255	8%	8	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-174	55%	2	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-91	5%	5	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-150	3%	4	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-126	0%	12	0%
Head Start	-85	35%	10	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-77	35%	3	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-214	7%	1	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-154	47%	1	100%

four other providers received a rating of 3 stars or lower.
Most of the area providers were not participating in GSQ.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

BAXTER AND OTTAWA HILLS

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 5

The Baxter and Ottawa Hills neighborhood had the fifth highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It was seventh for the overall birth to 2-year-old and fifth for the overall 3- to 5-year-old service gaps. The neighborhood had the greatest need for 3- to 5-year-old slots, particularly the Great Start Readiness Program and market rate care.

Most programs had service levels at 35 percent or below in Baxter and Ottawa Hills. The programs with the highest service levels, GSRP and market rate for ages three to five, also had the highest service gap rankings. The needs of the neighborhood were fairly disperse across programs and age groups.

The Baxter and Ottawa Hills neighborhood had greater need for GSRP and market rate care for 3- to 5-year-olds than other Grand Rapids neighborhoods. The GSRP service level for the neighborhood was about 30 percentage points less than the citywide level. The market rate care service level for 3- to 5-year-olds was 25 percentage points less than citywide. The service levels for subsidized care for both age groups with less than Grand Rapids overall.

Demographics

In 2016, Baxter and Ottawa Hills had a population of 885 young children. Fifty-seven percent of children were living at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which was slightly higher than the Grand Rapids average. A third of children were in families unlikely to be able to comfortably afford ECE services

Population Characteristics	Baxter & Ottawa Hills	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	455	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	430	8,472
Poverty, Children Ages 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	57%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	35%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	4%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	9%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	50%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	0%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	37%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	49%	60%
Single Parent	51%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	28%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	16%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	0%	2%
Single Parent, Working	29%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	27%	10%

and yet do not qualify for state and federal assistance. Half of the Baxter and Ottawa Hills population was African-American, significantly higher than across the city overall. There were about 11 percent more single parents in the area than Grand Rapids citywide. Over half of the families in this neighborhood were likely to require full-day, full-year care (single parents and two working parent households), which was ten percent less the citywide average.

Demand

Of the 455 infants and toddlers in Baxter and Ottawa Hills, approximately 62 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 74 percent of the 430 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 284 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 68 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 34 percent qualified for subsidized care. For this neighborhood, Early Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service and no slots available.

Of the 319 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 51 percent qualified for Head Start, 39 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 28 percent were eligible for the GSRP.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 52 percent of children likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 66 percent of children likely needed licensed or registered market rate care. For 3- to 5-year-olds in this neighborhood, market rate had the largest number of children requiring service.

Supply

Baxter and Ottawa Hills had 26 slots for infants and toddlers and 241 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 258 infants and toddlers and 78 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they need. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was nine percent and 76 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was less than Grand

Demand & Supply	Baxter & Ottawa Hills	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	284	26
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	319	241
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	96	13
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	123	15
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	194	0
Head Start Eligible	163	57
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	88	45
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	149	13
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	212	157

Rapids as a whole with a service level of 14 percent for birth to 2-year-olds and 12 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 35 percent, slightly higher than the city average.

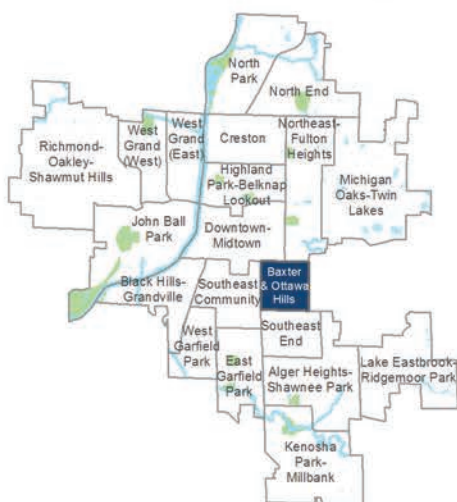
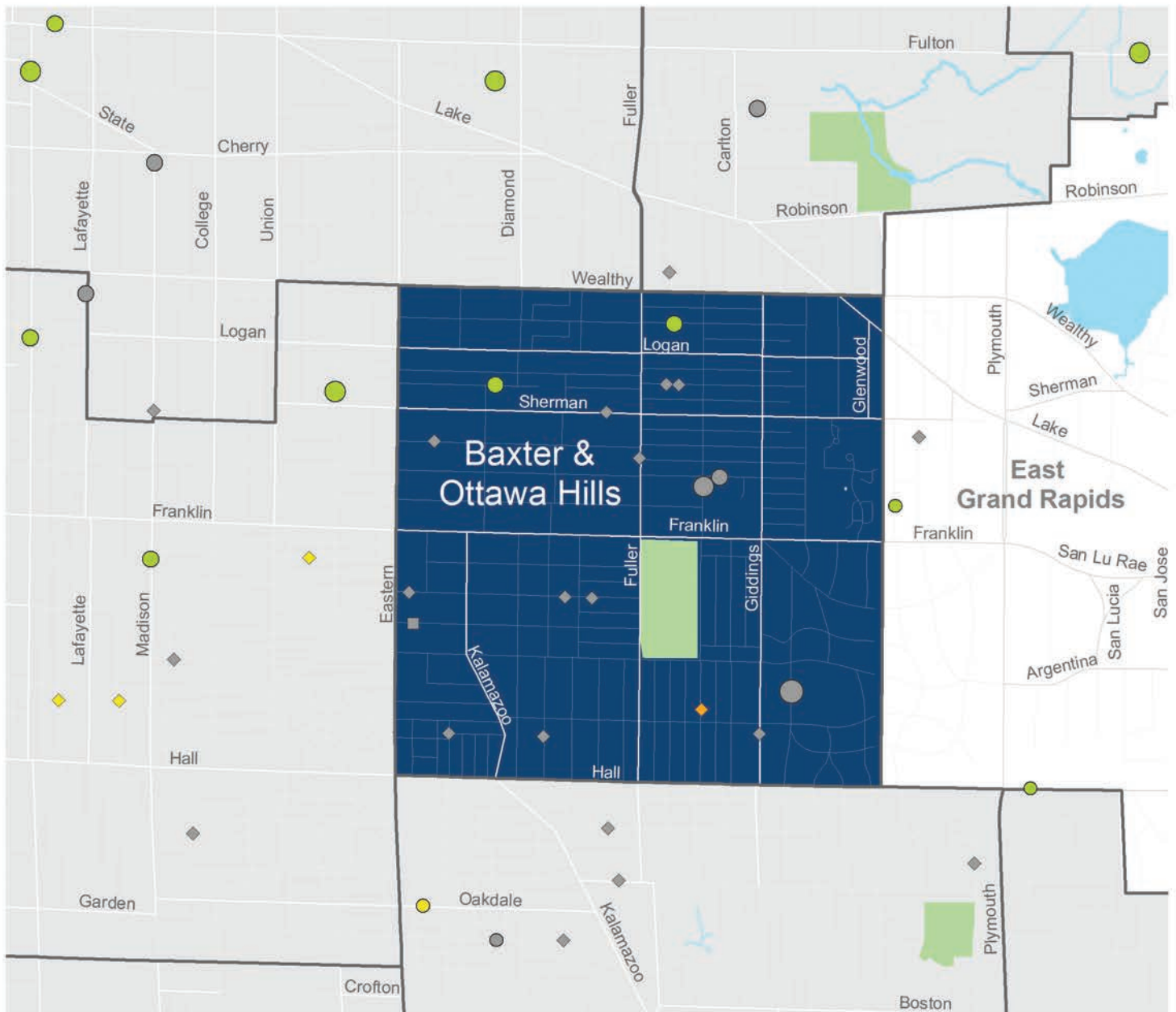
The Baxter and Ottawa Hills neighborhood had a service level of 51 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. Service was lower than the citywide average of 84 percent and was the neighborhoods highest need program.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 74 percent, for the neighborhood. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was much lower at nine percent.

There were many licensed and registered providers in and around the Baxter and Ottawa Hills neighborhood. Most Child Care Centers participated in the Great Start to

Meeting the Need	Baxter and Ottawa Hills Gap	Baxter and Ottawa Hills Service Level	Baxter and Ottawa Hills Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-258	9%	7	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-78	76%	5	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-83	14%	7	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-108	12%	8	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-194	0%	7	0%
Head Start	-106	35%	7	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-43	51%	5	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-136	9%	15	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-55	74%	6	100%

Quality rating system and achieved a 4 star rating. Most home-based care providers did not participate in GSQ and those that do achieved a 3 or 2 star rating.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

EAST GARFIELD PARK

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 6

The East Garfield Park neighborhood had the sixth overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. It ranked sixth for the overall birth to 2-year-old and eighth for the overall 3- to 5-year-old service gaps. The neighborhood's greatest need was for Early Head Start, Head Start, and market rate care for both age groups.

The highest amount of service was available for the Great Start Readiness Program, which had a service level four percentage points higher than the citywide average. In other state and federally funded programs, the service levels were only at 30 percent or less. Since the need was great across Grand Rapids, East Garfield Park ranked ninth and tenth for subsidized care/ For Head Start, this neighborhood was ranked fifth in terms of need, despite having amount the same service level as citywide.

The service gap rankings for market rate care for both age groups were the highest for East Garfield Park. Market rate care, Early Head Start, and Head Start were the priority areas for this neighborhood. Need, however, was dispersed among all other programs.

Demographics

In 2016, East Garfield Park had a population of 938 young children. Half of these children were at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), similar to the citywide average. Subsequently, about half of children were in families unlikely to be able to comfortably afford ECE services and yet do not qualify

Population Characteristics	East Garfield Park	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	475	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	463	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	50%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	46%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	8%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	20%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	36%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	1%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	37%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	50%	60%
Single Parent	50%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	25%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	14%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	0%	2%
Single Parent, Working	53%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	8%	10%

for state and federal assistance.

The population of East Garfield Park was more diverse than most other neighborhoods of Grand Rapids. Half of households were married and half of households were single parents, slightly more than the citywide average. Full-day, full-year services were a priority in the area with almost 80 percent of families likely to require these services (single working parents and two working parent households).

Demand

Of the 475 infants and toddlers in East Garfield Park, approximately 67 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 76 percent of the 463 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 319 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 65 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 29 percent qualified for subsidized care. Of the 350 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 53 percent qualified for Head Start, 36 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 26 percent were eligible for the GSRP.

In the birth to 2-year-old age group, 66 percent of children likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For the 3- to 5-year-old age group, 75 percent of children likely needed licensed or registered market rate care. For this neighborhood, market rate for both age groups had the largest number of children requiring service.

Supply

East Garfield Park had 46 slots for infants and toddlers and 331 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 273 infants and toddlers and 19 3- to 5-year-olds without the care they needed. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was 14 percent and 95 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was low, though still higher than Grand Rapids as a whole. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 30 percent, similar to the city average.

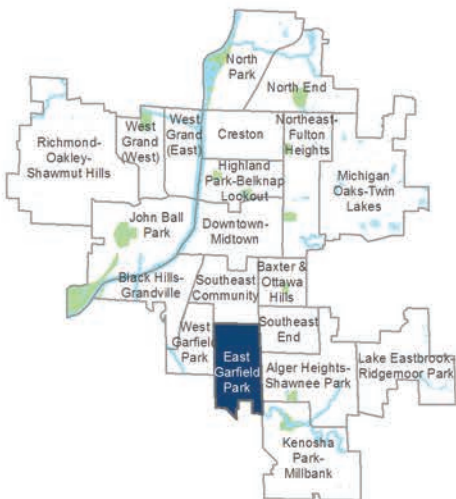
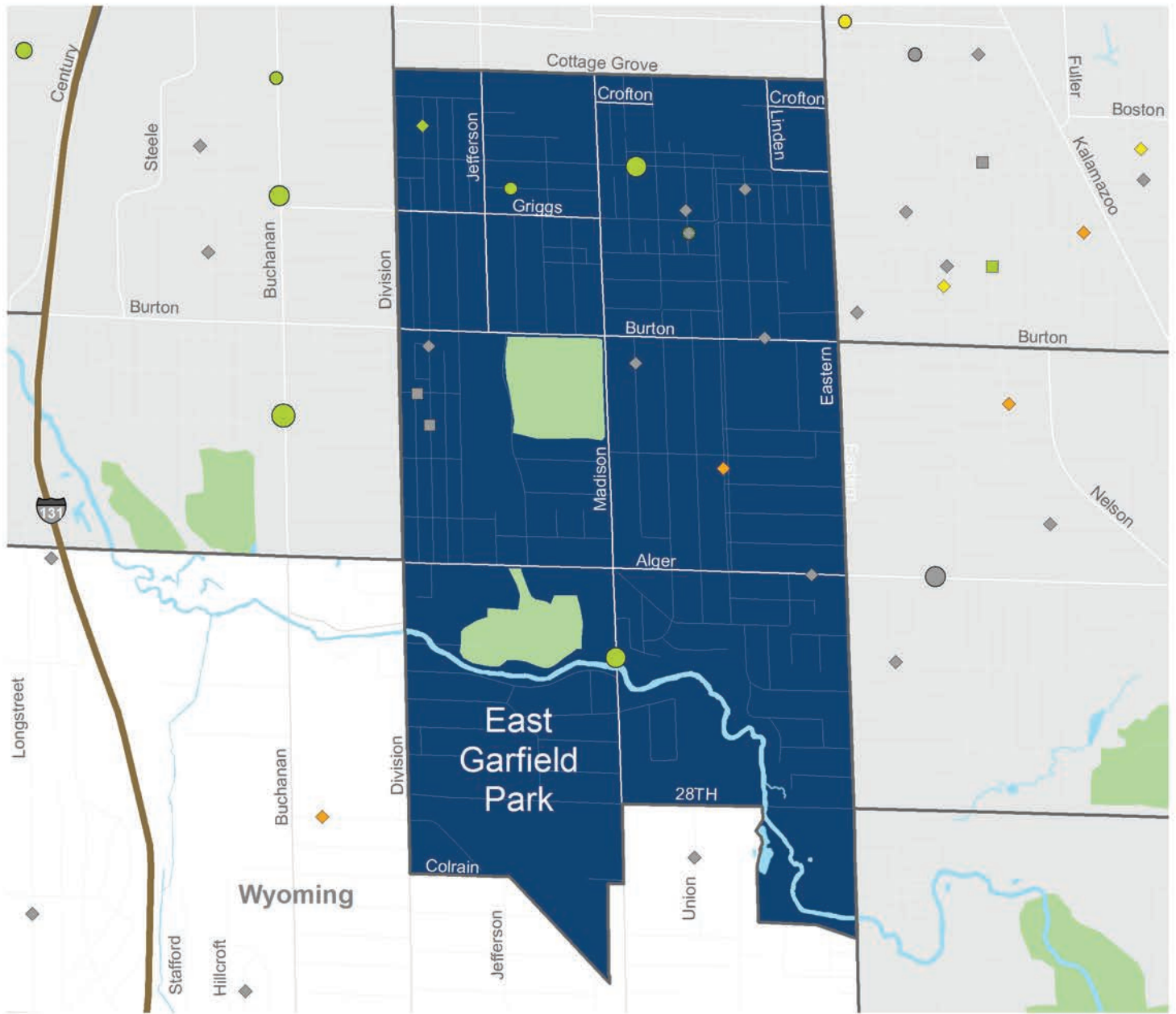
Demand & Supply	East Garfield Park	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	319	46
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	350	331
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	92	27
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	127	22
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	208	0
Head Start Eligible	184	55
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	90	76
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	212	19
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	262	206

The East Garfield Park neighborhood had a service level of 84 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program. This was the highest service level of the area, though still did not meet the needs of the entire community.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was had a 79 percent service level. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was much lower at nine percent, which was about half of the citywide average.

The licensed and registered providers serving East Garfield Park who participated in the Great Start to Quality rating system were performing at a high level with most achieving a 4 star rating. A couple of Family and Group Child Care Home providers received a 2 star rating. About half of the area providers were not participating in GSQ.

Meeting the Need	East Garfield Park Gap	East Garfield Park Service Level	East Garfield Park Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-273	14%	6	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-19	95%	8	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-65	29%	10	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-105	17%	9	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-208	0%	6	0%
Head Start	-129	30%	5	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-14	84%	10	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-193	9%	4	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-56	79%	5	100%



SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY

HIGHEST-NEED NEIGHBORHOOD 7

The Southeast Community neighborhood had the seventh highest overall need for early care and education services across Grand Rapids. The neighborhood had a greater need for services for infants and toddlers than for children ages three to five. It ranked third for the overall birth to 2-year-old service gap and first for the service gap for market rate care for infants and toddlers.

Southeast Community met the needs of many 3- to 5-year-old children with service levels for this age group overall and market rate, just below the citywide averages. However, the neighborhoods rankings in terms of need for these categories were still eleventh or tenth.

Similar to Grand Rapids as a whole, Southeast Community needs greater state and federally programs and services for children birth to 2-years-old. Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program had service levels of 51 and 69 percent. The service levels for subsidized care in the area were close to the citywide averages, but still ranked the sixth in terms of need.

Demographics

In 2016, Southeast Community had a population of 1,071 young children, the second largest in Grand Rapids. Over half of children were at or below the 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). More than 40 percent of children were in families unlikely to be able to comfortably afford ECE services and yet do not qualify for state and federal assistance.

Population Characteristics	Southeast Community	Citywide
Child Population		
0-2-Year-Olds	561	8,805
3-5-Year-Olds	510	8,472
Poverty, Children Age 0-5		
% Below 125% FPL	56%	47%
% Between 125-400% FPL	42%	44%
% Above 400% FPL	2%	9%
Race and Ethnicity		
Hispanic	25%	16%
African-American (non-Hispanic)	51%	20%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	0%	2%
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	18%	58%
Household Composition (w/ children under 6)		
Married	39%	60%
Single Parent	61%	40%
Parental Working Status (w/ children under 6)		
Two Parents, Both Working	19%	33%
Two Parents, One Working	19%	19%
Two Parents, Not Working	0%	2%
Single Parent, Working	50%	36%
Single Parent, Not Working	12%	10%

Over half the population of Southeast Community was African-American, significantly higher than across the city overall. There were 20 percent more single parents in the area than Grand Rapids citywide. There were also a higher number of teenage births in the Southeast Community neighborhood, 25 percent of all births, which was 21 percentage points higher than the city average. Similar to Grand Rapids overall, about 70 percent of the families in this neighborhood were likely to require full-day, full-year care (single parents and two working parent households).

Demand

Of the 561 infants and toddlers in Southeast Community, approximately 66 percent were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education. For the 3- to 5-years-old age group, about 82 percent of the 510 children were likely to need licensed or registered early care and education.

Of the 368 infants and toddlers in need of ECE services, 65 percent qualified for Early Head Start and 30 percent qualified for subsidized care. A further 63 percent of children ages birth to two likely required market rate care by a licensed or registered provider. For this neighborhood, Early Head Start had the largest number of children requiring service and no slots available.

Of the 419 3- to 5-year-olds in need of ECE services, 47 percent qualified for Head Start, 36 percent qualified for subsidized care, and 32 percent were eligible for the GSRP. A further 67 percent of children age three to five likely needed licensed or registered market rate care. For this age group in this neighborhood, market rate care had the largest number of children requiring service.

Supply

Southeast Community had 38 slots for infants and toddlers and 428 slots for 3- to 5-year-olds with licensed and registered providers. Subsequently, there were 330 infants and toddlers without the care they needed and a surplus of nine 3- to 5-year-olds slots. The service level for birth to 2-year-olds was ten percent and 102 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds.

The service level for subsidized care was about the same as Grand Rapids as a whole with a service level of 20 percent for birth to 2-year-olds and 17 percent for 3- to

Demand & Supply	West Garfield Park	
Overall Early Childhood Education	Demand	Supply
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	368	38
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	419	428
Subsidized Care		
Subsidy Eligible 0-2-Year-Olds	111	22
Subsidy Eligible 3-5-Year-Olds	150	25
Head Start		
Early Head Start Eligible	238	0
Head Start Eligible	199	102
Great Start Readiness Program		
GSRP Eligible	134	93
Market Rate Care		
0-2-Year-Olds Needing Care	230	16
3-5-Year-Olds Needing Care	281	262

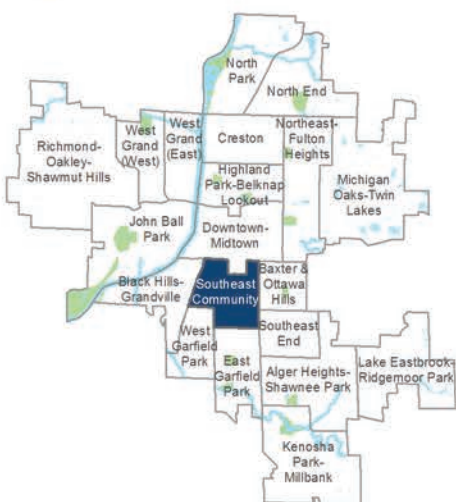
5-year-olds. For Head Start, the service level in this neighborhood was 51 percent, 20 percentage points higher than the city average. Reflecting the high demand for Early Head Start in the area, the neighborhood ranked fourth in terms of need.

The Southeast Community neighborhood had a service level of 69 percent for the Great Start Readiness Program, slightly below the citywide average. However, the area had high demand for GSRP and so ranks sixth in terms of need.

Market rate care for children ages three to five was the category with the highest service level, 93 percent, for the neighborhood. The service level for market rate care for infants and toddlers was much lower at seven percent. The Southeast Community had greater demand for this category and ranks first for its need for market rate care for infants and toddlers.

Meeting the Need	Southeast Community Gap	Southeast Community Service Level	Southeast Community Need Rank	Citywide Service Level
Overall Early Childhood Education				
0-2-Year-Olds	-330	10%	3	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	9	102%	11	106%
Subsidized Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-89	20%	6	21%
3-5-Year-Olds	-125	17%	6	16%
Head Start				
Early Head Start	-238	0%	4	0%
Head Start	-97	51%	9	29%
Great Start Readiness Program				
	-41	69%	6	80%
Market Rate Care				
0-2-Year-Olds	-214	7%	1	16%
3-5-Year-Olds	-19	93%	10	100%

The licensed and registered providers serving Southeast Community who participated in the Great Start to Quality rating system were performing at a high level with most achieving a 4 star rating. About a fourth of GSQ participating providers were rated 3 stars. Half of the area providers, mostly home-based care, were not participating in GSQ.



Great Start to Quality Rating

- Five Stars
- Four Stars
- Three Stars
- Two Stars
- One Star, or Rating in Progress
- Licensed or registered, but without a rating

□ IFF Study Geography

Provider Type

- Child Care Center
- Group Child Care Home
- ◇ Family Child Care Home

Child Care Center Capacity

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 300

APPENDIX

DETAILED METHODOLOGY

The core analysis presented in *A System for All Children* is a supply and demand needs assessment. The focus of the report is on the number of children without access to an Early childhood education (ECE) provider across programs, neighborhoods, and overall. It subtracts the number of children likely to seek an ECE slot (**demand**) from the capacity of licensed and registered providers (**supply**) for each neighborhood in Grand Rapids in 2016.

The difference between supply and demand is called the **service gap**, the total number of children without access to ECE provider. The larger the service gap, the greater the need for early childhood education opportunities in a community. Each community is ranked based on its service gap. The neighborhood with the greatest number of children without an ECE slot ranks number one.

The spatial analysis and emphasis on neighborhoods within a city is distinct to IFF's ECE methodology. Service gap rankings for each program, age group, and the city overall are displayed on maps of Grand Rapids throughout the report. The neighborhoods for Grand Rapids were created using the city neighborhoods maps from the City of Grand Rapids' Community Development Department. Neighborhoods were then adjusted based on child populations to create twenty recognizable and comparable neighborhoods. The top third of neighborhoods with the greatest need/service gap are highlighted in the report as the highest-need neighborhoods.

To clarify the type of ECE services needed in a community, the analysis is divided into age groups: birth to 2-year-olds (also referred to as infants and toddlers), and 3- to 5-year-olds (excluding 5-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten). A

System for All Children provides an overview of the ECE system through multiple rankings: a system-wide service gap rank, a system-wide service gap rank for each age group, and a program-specific service gap rank for each age group. The system-wide service gap rank is the mean rank of both age group's service gap.

The rankings by programs — the Child Development and Care (CDC) Program, called subsidized care; Early Head Start; Head Start; the Great Start Readiness Program; and market rate care — provide nuance of Grand Rapids' ECE system. The system-wide service gap rank and overall rank by age group include supply from all of these programs. For the individual programs, supply is calculated based on reported program funding data when available and demand is calculated based on eligibility requirements for each program. Because some children are eligible for more than one program, the overall service gap ranks by age group remove the overlap in demand.

The formula used to calculate supply and demand for each age group and each program is distinct. Therefore, each is explained in detail below.

DEMAND

Demand is the number of young children, living in Grand Rapids in 2016, who are likely to need early childhood education services. These figures are determined by using US Census population estimates. The eligibility requirements of each program are used to estimate the number of children who need service. Because eligibility requirements for programs overlap, some children are eligible for more than one program. In the overall service gaps by age, the formula used to count children eliminates the double counting that arises from this overlap.

To estimate the number of children eligible for the program, the methodology uses the data collected from the U.S. Census' American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimate. Outside of the decennial census years, we prefer not to rely on U.S. Census ACS data to accurately count the 0-5 population. Instead, our analysis uses demographic projections from Esri. Esri uses Experian; the US Postal Service (USPS); Metrostudy, a Hanley Wood company, and several ancillary sources to provide what is considered the most accurate population count in the industry.

However, Esri does not provide the nuanced income cuts necessary to estimate the number of children in each community by program. Therefore, the analysis uses U.S. Census data on income to calculate the proportion of children eligible for each program by census tract and multiplies this by the Esri figures for children in each census tract. We then aggregate this census tract count to find the number of children eligible for each program in each community.

Early Head Start, Head Start, and Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)

Early Head Start and Head Start were established federally to improve the long-term educational outcomes of low-income children. Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) was established in Michigan to prepare 4-year-olds at risk for low educational attainment for kindergarten. Demand for these programs includes all eligible children for each respective program. Although the Great Start Readiness Program targets 4-year-olds below 250 percent Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the U.S. Census only reports at 200 percent FPL and 300 percent FPL. Therefore, the study counts all 4-year-old children below 200 percent FPL, taking the more conservative number.

Subsidized Care and Market Rate Care

Subsidized care programs vary by state but are designed to assist low-income parents access to early childhood education services. Eligible children are identified according to the eligibility requirements of the state. For Grand Rapids in 2016, the eligibility for Michigan's Child Development and Care Program (CDC), referred to in the report as subsidized care, is children in families living at or below 121 percent federal poverty. The American Community Survey does not report poverty levels with this specificity, so a proxy of 125 percent FPL is used in this study. This slightly overestimates the amount of children eligible for subsidized care, but is the closest available cut point in the data.

Market rate care includes all children who are likely to require these services and similarly is reduced by a multiplier that estimates the number likely to need Early childhood education services.

Rather than using the total population of children, IFF calculates the number of children likely to access provider-based ECE services. This is based on the Early Childhood Program Participation (ECPP) survey, which is part of the National Household Education Surveys Program and conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Educational Sciences (IES), and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2012. The ECPP survey presents information on families across the United States and their use of various child care services. The results of this survey were examined to determine the likelihood that a specific family type (two-parent both working, two-parent one working, two-parent neither working, one-parent working, or one-parent not working) in similar Midwest cities will seek formal ECE services for their child

(birth to 2-year-olds or 3- to 5-year-olds).

While it may be ideal for all children to have access to early childhood education services, not all parents will choose to use these services. The reasons behind this choice can vary from having a parent/guardian who stays home, preferring to use family or friend care, being able to afford in-home nanny services, or being unable to afford or access provider care. Given that some families will elect not to use the formal ECE services examined in this study, IFF multiplies the child populations by the likelihood that other similar families in similar locations choose to use formal ECE services.

SUPPLY

Supply is the capacity of licensed and registered early childhood education providers — both child care centers and homes — in Grand Rapids in 2016. The capacity of these providers is distributed in Grand Rapids and the surrounding region based on the expected area served by the provider. For ECE home-based providers, capacity is distributed across a 1-mile radius surrounding the provider. For ECE center-based providers, half of the capacity is distributed across a 1-mile radius and the other half is distributed across a 4-mile radius surrounding the provider. Within this calculation is the assumption that families and children should have access to care close to their home. It further reflects knowledge from previous research that families are more likely to travel farther for center care than home-based care.

IFF's calculation of supply takes into account that families often seek care from the nearest ECE provider of high-quality. While city and neighborhood boundaries may

play a role in where parents choose to travel for care, these borders are highly porous. Families and children within Grand Rapids may use early education services from areas surrounding the city and, at the same time, families and children surrounding Grand Rapids may use early education services within the city. Supply is then distributed as described above without taking into account city boundaries. The focus of this report remains the number of children within Grand Rapids being served by an ECE provider, whether within the city or not.

When child-level data is available for programs (subsidized care, Head Start, and the Great Start to Readiness Program), the number of children within Grand Rapids that are served by that ECE provider are then counted as supply. This presents an accurate view of the number of children actually receiving care rather than capacity based estimation. The supply of each provider is distributed as described above, however, city boundaries are taken into account. Supply is only distributed within the city of Grand Rapids as it is known how many children within the city are being served by that provider.

In calculating supply for individual programs, the count includes only the providers participating in the target program. If a center is participating in multiple programs, due to braided or blended funding, slots are counted as a single slot for each program. Without accurate data of the amount of funding provided for each slot, IFF cannot make an estimate of which program should account for that slot and it is therefore counted in both. These duplicated slots are only counted towards the overall supply once.

In some cases there is not enough data available to determine the specific number of children in each

program and of each age group. When this is the case, as it is for market rate care in Grand Rapids, capacity is distributed for birth to 2-year-olds and 3- to 5-year-olds based on information we have on the age groups served by a provider and the likelihood that each age group will participate in the formal ECE system (based on the NCES Early Childhood Program Participation Survey 2012). Since child-level data is unavailable for market rate care, supply is calculated as the capacity of that provider minus the subsidized care, Head Start, and Great Start to Readiness Program slots. Supply is then distributed around the provider as described above without consideration of city borders.

Total supply for each age group is calculated by adding the available slots from each program, subtracting blended or braided slots. Given available child-level data on most programs, this total number of slots is a reliable estimation of the number of children who were served by providers in 2016.

To assess each program's quality ratings and, in turn, the supply of quality care, this report would ideally would use Michigan's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), known as Great Start to Quality. However, in 2016 only about 40 percent of licensed and registered providers participated. At present, the GSQ is included for analytical purposes throughout the report. In some cases, providers may have been in the process of recertification and are therefore shown with no GSQ. Lacking higher participation in a quality rating system, the study uses the requirements of obtaining and maintaining a license or registration as a baseline of quality.

The provider data used in this study is from the end of 2016 and collected from multiple sources. Given that

provider details change and available data is updated regularly, it must be noted that the information presented in this report reflects an analysis of a single moment in time.

With these program-specific formulas for supply and demand, a service gap is identified for each program. To identify the overall service gap by age group, the overlap in eligibility requirements is eliminated. The two overall service gap ranks by age group are averaged to identify the system-wide service gap, and thus, the highest-need neighborhoods.

DATA SOURCES

Data used to prepare this report were collected from the following sources:

Michigan Department of Human Services Statewide Text File of Child care Facilities

Accessed: November 15, 2016

Database of providers including:

All licensed child care centers, licensed group child care homes, and registered family child care homes

Michigan Department of Education

Accessed: July 2016 and November 15, 2016

Database of providers including: Unlicensed early childhood education providers enrolled in the Child Development and Care Program, Providers participating in the Great Start to Quality rating system

Great Start Collaborative Kent County

Accessed: October 21, 2016

Database of providers including: Great Start Readiness Program Providers in Kent County

City of Grand Rapids,

Community Development Department
City Neighborhoods Map

Esri Demographics

2015 Population by Single Year Age and Sex

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Head Start, Head Start Locator

Accessed: November 15, 2016

List of all Head Start centers

U.S. Census Bureau

2011-2015 American Community Survey

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ENDNOTES

¹ These figures are determined by taking into account household income, employment status of parents, and family composition. For example, 18 percent of infants and toddlers in two-parent households in which only one parent works require early care and education services. Among low-income families, the percentage increases to 25 percent. Those families generally choose to have the non-working parent care for their children, and thus do not place a demand on the early care and education system or access care outside the ECE system. (Based on ECPP-NHES:2005).

² This is assuming that some of these birth to 2-year-olds could access the available slots for 3- to 5-year-olds. This is not usually the case as these age groups require different types of services.

³ Corcoran et al., *Early Childhood Program Participation 2016*.

⁴ Corcoran et al., *ECPP 2016*.

⁵ A surplus or oversupply of slots occurs when a neighborhood has more supply than demand. These slots are likely filled by children, whose family's travel to areas with greater services available. While some families are able to arrange transportation, it can place an unnecessary burden on children and parents.

⁶ NAEYC, *Supporting Cultural Competence*.

⁷ Great Start Readiness Program is available to 4-year-olds in families with income levels below 250 percent FPL.

⁸ Gould and Cooke, "High Quality Child Care Is Out Of Reach."

⁹ This is an average, though it depends on the number of children and people in household. The lowest cost care for a child in Michigan in 2016 would be around \$7,000 a year (Gould and Cooke). This would be about 9 percent of income for a household of three at 400 percent Federal Poverty Level (81 *Federal Register* 15).

¹⁰ Federal guidelines suggest affordable early care and education is 10 percent of income in 2016 (63 *Federal Register* 142). The guidelines have since decreased to 7 percent of income (81 *Federal Register* 190). Also, see Pao, "US Parents Are Sweating."

¹¹ Chaudry, Pedroza, and Sandstrom, "How Employment Constraints"; Glynn, Farrell, and Wu, *The Importance of Preschool*.

¹² Schulman and Blank, *Red Light Green Light*.

¹³ Michigan, “CDC Income Eligibility Scale and Provider Rates.”

¹⁴ Helburn, *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes.*; Peisner-Feinberg et al., *The Children of the CQO Study*; Phillips and Shonkoff, *From Neurons To Neighborhoods*.

¹⁵ Dearing, McCartney, and Taylor, “Does higher quality early child care promote?”

¹⁶ Schweinhart et al., *Michigan Great Start Readiness Program Evaluation 2012*.

¹⁷ Bartik, *From Preschool to Prosperity*.

¹⁸ Reynolds et al., “Association of a full-day vs part-day”; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, “Child Outcomes”; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, “Does quality of child care affect child outcomes?”

¹⁹ Wechsler et al., *The Building Blocks Of High-Quality ECE Programs*.

²⁰ Great Start to Quality, “How Great Start to Quality Works.”

²¹ Rating information was collected in November 2016 and reflects the number of stars as assigned by GSQ at that time, which may be affected by issues of recertification or relocation.

²² Michigan, “CDC Income Eligibility Scale and Provider Rates.”

²³ Corcoran et al., *ECPP 2016*.

²⁴ Wallen and Hubbard, *Blending and Braiding Toolkit*.

²⁵ Zentmeyer, Anya. “GRCC’s New Preschool Lab Sets Sights On Becoming Early Childhood Hub For The Area.” *Rapid Growth*, January 19, 2017.

²⁶ Schulman and Blank, *Red Light Green Light*.

²⁷ Michigan, *New Report Reveals Michigan Child Gaps*.

²⁸ U.S. Office of Head Start, “Head Start Programs.”

²⁹ About 100 children received in-home Early Head Start services.

³⁰ French, “Hundreds qualify for Head Start/Great Start.”

³¹ For this report, we assess eligibility for the Great Start Readiness Program as below 200 percent of FPL due to the information provided in the census data. This provides a more conservative estimate of demand for these ECE slots. Michigan requires that children who qualify for Head Start, families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level, attend Head Start rather than GSRP, but all of the children below 250 percent FPL qualify for this program.

³² Schweinhart et al., *Michigan Great Start Readiness Program Evaluation 2012*.

³³ McVicar, “Michigan’s Preschool Program Ranked 15th.”

³⁴ This is an average, though it depends on the number of children and people in household. The lowest cost care for a child in Michigan in 2016 would be around \$7,000 a year (Gould and Cooke). This would be about 9 percent of income for a household of three at 400 percent Federal Poverty Level (81 *Federal Register* 15). Federal guidelines suggest affordable early care and education is 10 percent of income in 2016 (63 *Federal Register* 142). The guidelines have since decreased to 7 percent of income (81 *Federal Register* 190).

³⁵ Great Start Readiness Program is available to 4-year-olds in families with income levels below 250 percent FPL.

³⁶ West Grand (East) also has 75 percent of its population living below 125 percent FPL.

³⁷ Black Hills-Grandville also has 75 percent of its population living below 125 percent FPL.



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