

Stearns County: Early Learning in Child Care by the Numbers

Parent Aware

Parent Aware is Minnesota's statewide quality ratings and improvement system for early learning programs, providing information to parents on what program is best for their family. Initially launched in targeted counties in 2012, Parent Aware brings the same measure of quality to all early learning programs including Head Start, center and home-based child care, public and private programs.

- Stearns County became eligible for Parent Aware in 2013
- There are 444 Licensed Family Child Care programs and 41 Child Care Centers in the county
- 41 Licensed Family Child Care providers are participating in Parent Aware and 13 have achieved a 3 or 4 star rating
- 24 Child Care Centers are participating in Parent Aware and 13 have achieved a 3 or 4 star Parent Aware rating

Early Learning Scholarships

Early Learning Scholarships allow eligible families to find the high quality early learning program that best meets their needs. The most recent evaluation of Early Learning Scholarships shows they are helping the most in-need families send their children to high quality programs of all types and improving early development across the board.

- 34 children receiving Pathway 1 Early Learning Scholarships as compared with 72 in the Region
- 165 children receiving Pathway 2 Early Learning Scholarships as compared with 298 in the Region

Child Care Assistance Program

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is an essential pillar of early childhood assistance for thousands of Minnesota families. It provides financial assistance to families who meet income eligibility and participation requirements, allowing parents to work or go to school while their children get the start they need in life.

- 593 children receiving CCAP, 22% of which are in Parent Aware Rated programs
- 138 children are on the CCAP waitlist as compared with 6890 on the statewide waiting list