

# Press Release



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## **25 Central Indiana Child Care Ministries Achieve Voluntary Certification**

The end of June this year marked the end of a year-long child care ministry improvement project in Central Indiana. The project focused on improving the quality of care in 60 child care ministries with the ultimate goal of ministries meeting the standards for the Voluntary Certification Program (VCP). The project was made possible by funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment act (ARRA) and was led by United Way of Central Indiana. Child Care Answers played a vital role in the project by providing mentors to help guide the ministries to Paths to QUALITY. Improving quality was accomplished in several ways in addition to the mentoring services. Child care staff received mini-grants for professional development and therefore improved their skills in working with children. The ministries also received curriculum materials for their classrooms to improve those areas as well. By the end of the project 19 child care ministries had achieved VCP and will be enrolled in Paths to QUALITY. This is in addition to the 6 child care ministries who had participated in a limited pilot project making for a total of 25 ministries.

Regulations for child care ministries in the State of Indiana are very minimal. A ministry must register with the state and meet basic health and safety guidelines. A ministry that has achieved VCP has gone above and beyond the requirements and met additional staff training and requirements, child-staff ratios and stricter classroom guidelines. Ministries must meet VCP in order to enroll in Paths to QUALITY.

Child Care Answers will continue its work on improving child care ministries by once again partnering with United Way of Central Indiana and assisting 20 additional ministries in working towards Voluntary Certification. Ministries located in Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks and Marion County interested in the program can contact Ginger Caylor at (317) 926-3401 ext. 306 for more information. The application deadline is Friday, July 29<sup>th</sup>.