

St. Vincent Early Learning Center  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Photo, video and interview opportunities available**

**St. Vincent Early Learning Center Receives \$40,000 grant  
to “Come Back Stronger” from Pandemic**

*Grant is part of statewide Come Back Stronger Fund from Early Learning Indiana*

**Evansville, Indiana** (July 6, 2020) – Early Learning Indiana recently awarded a \$40,000 grant to St. Vincent Early Learning Center as part of the \$15 million Come Back Stronger Fund, supported by Lilly Endowment, to reinforce Indiana’s supply of high-quality early learning opportunities, especially for the state’s most vulnerable children. St. Vincent Early Learning Center will use the grant funds to support safety-related expenses and challenges as it continues to serve families in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

“The health and safety of our children, families and staff is our top priority,” said St. Vincent Early Learning Center Executive Director Valerie Bostick. “In order for our community to come back stronger from the pandemic, high-quality child care is extremely important. We are committed to supporting families who need child care by providing a safe, fun and educational environment that helps children thrive.”

Founded in 1918, St. Vincent Early Learning Center will use the grant funds in three areas: PPE equipment and supplies needed to mitigate COVID-19; temporary staffing to enable support for COVID-related mitigation efforts; and learning materials and equipment to allow for more social distancing and less sharing of items and spaces.

“The pandemic has shone a light on the critical role early care and education providers play in our society,” said Early Learning Indiana President and CEO Maureen Weber. “Families need quality child care in order to go back to work, and children need safe and engaging environments to grow and learn. We’re grateful to St. Vincent Early Learning Center’s commitment to providing high-quality child care, and we’re excited to see what they and the other 154 providers do with their Come Back Stronger Fund grants.”

Early Learning Indiana awarded a total of \$2,341,000 to 155 providers in this first round of grant awards. St. Vincent Early Learning Center was required to submit a narrative on how it would use the grant funds and serve children from vulnerable populations, as well as meet the following criteria:

Be a licensed and registered center, ministry or family child care home provider in Indiana in good standing

Be an approved CCDF or On My Way Pre-K provider or a provider that otherwise serves children from vulnerable family populations, defined as households at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

Operate as a Paths to QUALITY™ Level 3 or 4, or as a Paths to QUALITY™ Level 2 with a demonstrated commitment to achieving a higher level of program quality

Serve children ages 0-5

Early child care organizations can still apply for a Come Back Stronger Fund grant at [www.earlylearningin.org/comebackstronger](http://www.earlylearningin.org/comebackstronger).

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**St. Vincent Early Learning Center** is a non-profit early childhood education organization that has served our community since 1918. The agency is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and has a Paths to Quality Level 4 rating—the highest level—from the state of Indiana. For more information, visit [www.stvincentearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stvincentearlylearningcenter.org) or like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/StVincentELC](http://www.facebook.com/StVincentELC).

**Early Learning Indiana** is Indiana’s oldest and largest early childhood education nonprofit, providing leadership, advocacy, and early childhood education services to continually improve the early learning landscape in Indiana. Today, Early Learning Indiana operates nine high-quality Day Early Learning centers, a network of premier community-based lab schools used to advance the science of early learning, train the next generation of teachers and leaders, and instill essential skills in the children we serve. Through regional and statewide programs, the organization enables early learning providers to build capacity, transform operations, and improve learning outcomes. More information is available at [EarlyLearningIndiana.org](http://EarlyLearningIndiana.org).

**Lilly Endowment Inc.** is a private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, the Endowment is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders’ wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.