



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2020

Contact: Kevin M. Ivers, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Phone: (269) 471-7725 ext. 1150

Berrien RESA, Lewis Cass and Van Buren ISDs Assist Essential Workers in Finding Child Care

BERRIEN SPRINGS-Executive Order 2020-16 calls upon Michigan's ISDs to coordinate community efforts to support childcare needs for essential workers during the COVID-19 crisis. Berrien RESA, Lewis Cass ISD and Van Buren ISD are answering the call and have developed a plan in collaboration with Southwest Child Care Resources and United Way of Southwest Michigan, and in special partnership with the YMCA of Michiana.

The plan asks essential workers (as defined in [Executive Order 2020-16](#)) find help by calling the statewide assistance number 2-1-1 or by visiting www.helpmegrow-mi.org/essential. Once a worker's information has been collected, a local representative will contact the essential worker within 24-48 hours to assist in finding an open child care facility with capacity to address child care needs.

Essential workers include health care, home health and direct care workers, emergency medical service providers, first responders, law enforcement personnel, sanitation workers, child care workers, personnel providing correctional services and other infrastructure support, postal workers, public health employees, key government employees and court personnel.

Child care locations and offerings may be different depending on the needs in each community. Open child care sites must follow protocols that will protect public health and follow regulatory guidelines put in place by the State of Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Public health protocols for these programs include, but are not limited to, small class sizes with the same participants and staff in each room, sick rooms/containment spaces for students or personnel that become sick, and intensified, deep cleaning every day to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19.

-###-