

About the Early Childhood Initiative

The KIDS PLUS Early Childhood Initiative is focused on ensuring young children, from birth through the early elementary years, thrive and have a healthy life of learning, achieving, and succeeding.

The Northland Foundation has established 12 early childhood coalitions in the region to strengthen local resources for young children and their families. The coalitions in our region include:

- Carlton County
- Hermantown/Proctor
- Aitkin County
- Itasca Area
- Koochiching County
- Mesabi East School District
- Quad Cities Area
- Hibbing
- Two Harbors
- Silver Bay
- Cook County
- Ely



The Northland Foundation has provided technical assistance and support to help each coalition engage a cross-section of community members, craft an early childhood vision, implement an action plan, and sustain their efforts. Northland also regularly convenes coalition representatives from all across northeastern Minnesota as a learning community so they can share ideas and best practices.

The Northland Foundation and the 12 early childhood coalitions in our region have leveraged The McKnight Foundation's contributions to raise significant additional funding to expand and continue their work supporting young children, families, and communities.

The Story of the Early Childhood Initiative

The 12 coalitions in northeastern Minnesota were established as part of the *Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative... A Campaign for Our Youngest Children* which was created by the Northland Foundation and the five other [Minnesota Initiative Foundations](#) in 2003, in partnership with [The McKnight Foundation](#). Since 2003, the Minnesota Initiative Foundations have developed a total of 90 coalitions throughout Greater Minnesota. This collaborative work has helped change the landscape of early care and education in our rural communities and statewide.