

**KRESGE EARLY YEARS
FOR SUCCESS: DETROIT**

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IFF Learning Spaces Focuses on Building Better Early Education System in Detroit
Nonprofit IFF to Award Grants to Child Care Providers Through Kresge Foundation Partnership

Detroit, MI—Midwest nonprofit IFF, in partnership with The Kresge Foundation, today launched IFF Learning Spaces, a program that will improve Detroit’s early education system by awarding grants to quality child care providers in neighborhoods across the city.

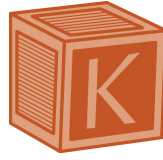
Providers can apply for grants from \$5,000 to \$15,000 to pay for real estate consulting, minor repairs to their facility or other facility-related needs. Assistance can range from fixing the lighting in a few classrooms to finding a permanent home after leasing for years. Nonprofits and home-based caregivers are eligible as long as they have a score of three stars or higher in Great Start to Quality, Michigan’s child care rating system.

“Many providers face challenges, both big and small, in helping Detroit’s youngest children gain a better start to their education,” said Monica Duncan, IFF’s director of early childhood services. “IFF Learning Spaces builds on IFF’s strong history of expanding quality care in low-income neighborhoods, and I’m thrilled to play a leading role in this work.”

Duncan will lead the IFF Learning Spaces program and host informational meetings for providers beginning Tuesday, June 21, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Marygrove College, 8425 W. McNichols Road, Detroit, MI 48221. Previously, Duncan was Michigan director for First Children’s Finance, a regional community development financial institution focused on early care and education programs.

The Kresge Foundation granted IFF \$150,000 to launch Learning Spaces and help quality providers in Detroit increase their capacity and improve access to child care and learning opportunities. This effort is part of Kresge Early Years for Success (KEYS): Detroit, a \$20-million, five-year initiative to promote the healthy development of Detroit children through investments in high-quality early childhood centers, neighborhood collaborations focused on early childhood development, early childhood workers and an infrastructure redesign that supports young children throughout the city.

“IFF has been committed to ensuring children reach their full potential since the beginning,” said Kirby Burkholder, IFF’s executive director in Detroit. “IFF Learning Spaces gives providers the resources and tools they need to help us build a better Detroit. We’re proud to be a key partner in Kresge’s efforts to improve Detroit’s early education system.”



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“Through Learning Spaces, quality Detroit child care providers will receive needed support to grow their businesses, improve their facilities and ultimately ensure more of Detroit’s youngest residents have a chance to learn in a safe, nurturing environment in their earliest years,” said Wendy Lewis Jackson, co-interim managing director of Kresge’s Detroit Program. “We hope as many providers as possible take advantage of this program and are so pleased to work alongside IFF to make it happen.”

The Kresge Foundation also made \$4 million in investments to IFF including a grant to support up to three new early childhood centers in Detroit and a program-related investment to create a low-interest loan program for child care facilities projects in the region.

Nearly 28,000 of the city’s children ages birth to 5 years old lacked access to quality early childhood care programs at licensed and registered facilities last year, according to an [IFF report](#) commissioned by The Kresge Foundation.

For more information about the grant program, visit iff.org/learningspaces.

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IFF is a mission-driven lender, real estate consultant and developer that helps communities thrive by creating opportunities for low-income populations and individuals with disabilities. From child care to senior housing, IFF works closely with clients from every sector, offering affordable, flexible financing; full-scale real estate consulting; and community development services. Since 1988, we have made over \$620 million in loans, leveraged \$1.7 billion in community investments and grown our total managed assets to \$498 million. In Michigan, IFF has provided nearly \$40 million in financing for nonprofits and housing developers across the state, and consulted with 40 agencies on real estate projects. For more information, visit iff.org.

The Kresge Foundation is a \$3.6 billion private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America’s cities through grantmaking and social investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services, and community development in Detroit. In 2015, the Board of Trustees approved 370 grants totaling \$125.2 million, and nine social investment commitments totaling \$20.3 million. For more information, visit kresge.org.