



RURAL CHILD CARE INNOVATION PROGRAM

COMMUNITY SOLUTION ACTION PLAN FOR CHILD CARE

BECKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA
MARCH, 2019

The Rural Child Care Innovation Program is possible due to generous funding from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.



This Community Solution Action Plan is designed to be a deep dive into the Rural Child Care Innovation Program. You will step through every stage of the community engagement process through solution development and implementation. Please visit www.ruralchildcare.org for continued updates on community progress.

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“If employees can’t find quality care for their children, they won’t work for you. They won’t move to your community, or they’ll be forced to move away, or they might have to consider quitting their job to stay home with their children because they have no other option.”

Kris Bevell

Editor
Prairie Business Magazine



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rural Child Care Innovation Program (RCCIP), is a community engagement process designed to develop right-sized solutions to address the needs of early care and education in Minnesota's rural communities. The goal of RCCIP is to help communities identify the scope and size of their child care challenges, and to empower and support communities to develop solutions to address these challenges.

The Community Solution Action Plan for Becker County, Minnesota, intends to outline the child care challenges identified in the community, and the proposed solutions to improve the state of child care in the area. A Core Team from Becker County, with the support of First Children's Finance, conducted a thorough investigation and analysis to uncover the factors creating the child care shortage in the area through focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys with a multitude of stakeholders in the community.

To understand the potential need for child care in Becker County, First Children's Finance conducted a Potential Needs Analysis, which showed a child care shortage of 648 slots. The analysis revealed that it's very difficult to be a child care provider due to numerous rules and regulations, low pay and no benefits, long hours, and high operating costs. Staffing is a significant expense for many child care programs, resulting in 60-80% of overall expenses. This heavily influences the ability of child care providers to sustain their child care operations.

The analysis revealed that the child care shortage has severely impacted parents living in Becker County. Nearly 33% of survey respondents declined employment or withdrew from the workforce due to child care issues. Absence from work (when a provider is closed for the day), inability to work a flexible schedule, inability to work different shifts, and tardiness to work hinders the ability of parents to advance in their careers.

Some of the major factors contributing to the child care shortage in Becker County include increase in dual-working families, attraction of new employees to the area, difficulties of being a child care provider and lack of community recognition for child care providers. Furthermore, there is a lack of business supports and business incentives in the area, including parent support and parent education.

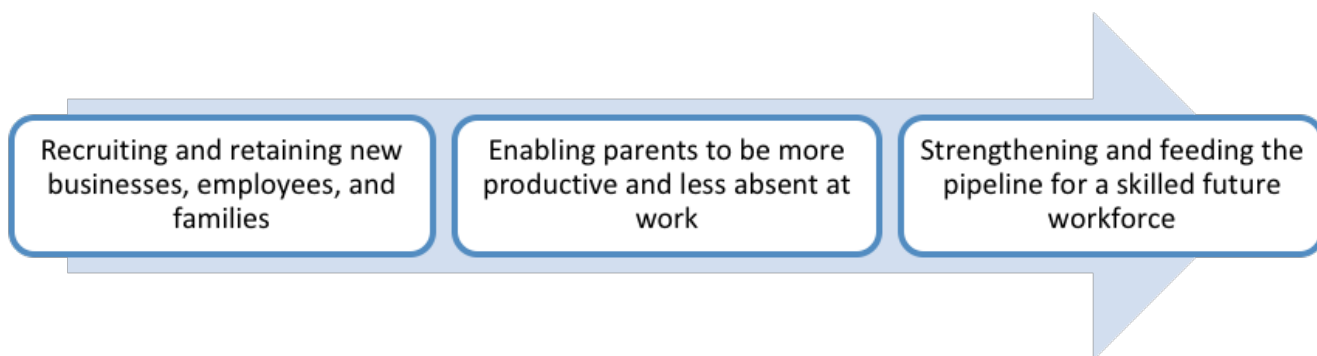
Through the RCCIP, Becker County has identified four goals to address the child care challenges. These goals include:

- Support co-located child care facilities in faith based organizations, non-profits, or businesses
- Child Care Providers will have a career pathway and access to start up resources for private, non-profit or child care center facility models
- Local low cost one day re-licensing training available for child care providers
- Identify Funding sources available to support new and existing child care providers

In implementing these goals, Becker County will improve the state of child care, empower local child care providers through continuous community support, provide parents with more care options, and providers with better resources to run and operate their child care businesses. In the next 12 months, First Children's Finance will support the core team in implementing these goals and measuring outcomes of their efforts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE IN COMMUNITIES

In rural communities, ebbs and flows of the local economy greatly influence the sustainability of a community's child care supply, and vice versa. That's why the Rural Child Care Innovation Program addresses child care and early education challenges through a framework of regional economic development. A robust supply of high quality child care fosters community growth through:



The connection is clear: when our children thrive, so do our communities. Investing in early care and education is not only the right thing to do for our youngest citizens, but the best thing to do for our economic growth and prosperity.

INTRODUCING THE RURAL CHILD CARE INNOVATION PROGRAM

Child care is an economic driver for rural communities across the United States but many communities are facing shortages of high quality child care. The Rural Child Care Innovation Program is based on the fundamental idea that rural communities are greater than their size in numbers and greater than their current challenges. By mobilizing and empowering rural communities, the landscape of early care and education is changing in rural America.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Children living in rural areas are more likely to come from low-income households than children in urban areas, and are more likely to be living in poverty for longer periods of time. Many rural areas struggle to attract and retain a young, educated workforce, while others lack the resources to keep up with their own growth and success. Although rural communities face many challenges, they are also resilient. They have the innovation it takes to develop nimble, creative solutions that will be effective in rural areas. The Rural Child Care Innovation Program leverages communities' independent, can-do attitudes to address early care and education in Greater Minnesota.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND GENERAL TIMELINE

APPLICATION PHASE		
ACTIVITIES	TIMING	DETAILS
Webinar	March 26, 2018	Information session on RCCIP
Application Deadline	April 30, 2018	
Selection of Communities	May 25, 2018	Communities notified via email
Program Setup	May 2018	FCF connected by phone with the main community contact to set up first Core Team meeting.

PLANNING PHASE		
ACTIVITIES	TIMING	DETAILS
Core Team Onboarding Retreat	July 26, 2018	Face-to-face meeting with FCF and the Core Team to discuss project details and expectations.
Core Team Planning Meeting	August 23, 2018	Face-to-face meeting to map out community engagement activities and fully develop the program timeline.
Community Engagement Activities	August 2018- October 2018	Implementation of engagement activities within the community.
Child Care Provider Trainings	February 2019 – June 2019	Series of business trainings and one-on-one consultations conducted by FCF.
Town Hall Event	November 15, 2018	Community wide event to identify and develop community solutions.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE		
ACTIVITIES	TIMING	DETAILS
Implementation Planning Retreat	December 2018- February 2019	Face-to-face meeting to map out smart goals and implementation activities with project teams.
Community Solution Action Plan	March 2019	Report detailing community data, types of solutions, and community identified projects.
Regular Project Team Meetings	February 2019 -September 2019	Implementation of community solutions.
Regular Core Team Meetings	February 2019- September 2019	Connect with FCF to discuss Project Team outcomes.
Technical Assistance Support	December 2018- September 2019	FCF is available for business support when needed.
Final Report	September 28, 2019	Core Team submits final report to FCF.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The Rural Child Care Innovation Program is designed to support fundamental change in the overall conditions for child care in the areas that it is delivered. This is accomplished through various methods that include:

- A thorough analysis of the current child care potential need, and evaluation of community factors impacting the local child care supply
- Events that educate community members about the link between quality child care, rural economic development and viable communities.
- A Community Solution Action Plan that includes innovative solutions generated through a facilitated Town Hall process
- Support and business improvement services to existing family child care providers and child care centers
- Access to First Children's Finance's expertise, resources and tools, including research and financial modeling
- Links to other communities working on similar issues

Measurements of success are determined through a tactical project management grid that provides guidance to the Core Team about the involved participants and their projected steps and progress towards project completion.

ABOUT BECKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Becker County is located in West Central Minnesota, has a population of approximately 34,098 people and about 1/3 of it is home to the southern portion of White Earth Reservation. Detroit Lakes is the county seat and is the largest town with a population of approximately 10,000 people with the remaining population living in small towns and rural areas. The population of Becker County is primarily Caucasian, but does have a 7.8% American Indian population and 3.4% of the population consists of two or more races. The population is steadily increasing at 4.9% per annum since 2010.

Becker County is one of the poorest counties in Minnesota, has one of the lower health rankings (70 out of 87 counties), and is stricken with poverty in over 1/3 of the county. The median income is \$54,115, below the state average with 1/3 of the county averaging less than \$38,000. The poverty rate of youth is 3% higher than the state average, making more children in Becker County at risk.

LOCAL CORE TEAM REPRESENTATION

The Core Team was identified locally and asked to commit to investigating the child care challenges in Becker County. The Core Team has and will continue to support development of solutions to sustain a high quality and sustainable child care infrastructure in the local area.

- **Karen Pifher**- Essentia Health
- **Kim Lage**- White Earth Child Care
- **Kitti Kivi-Lex**- Frazee Schools
- **Mary Rotter**- Laker Prep School
- **Katie Lundmark**- Ecumen
- **LuAnn Harris**- Lakes & Prairie Child Care Aware
- **Carrie Johnston**- Chamber of Commerce
- **Kelcey Klemm**- City of Detroit Lakes
- **Barb Mose**- Becker County Human Services
- **Fran Rethwisch** - Mahube/OTWA
- **Guy Fischer** - Becker County Economic Development Authority
- **Lori Thorp** - Mahube/OTWA
- **Brittany Nordick** – BTD
- **Myron Pauna** – SJE Rhombus
- **Viva Luinger**- Lakeshirts



CHILD CARE DATA AND EARLY EDUCATION TRENDS

As part of the Rural Child Care Innovation Program, the local community was provided with various forms of support to understand the contributing factors for the child care challenges. First Children’s Finance leveraged different data sources to pull together an illustrative picture of the impact of child care in the local area. These data sources include US Census Information, MN Child Care Licensing Records, Minnesota Department of Education, MN DEED, and other internal research tools including First Children’s Finance data.

POTENTIAL NEED OVERVIEW

First Children’s Finance conducted a supply and demand gap analysis which provided a view of potential child care needs. This analysis was conducted in July 2018 and showed a shortage of 648 slots in Becker County. Additional focus on the 56501 zip code in Detroit Lakes showed a gap of 213 slots.

ZIP CODE	CITY	# OF CHILD CARE CENTERS (CCC)	# OF FAMILY CARE CENTERS (FCC)	PLUS/ MINUS/ TOTAL
56501	Detroit Lakes	1	51	-213
56511	Audubon	0	4	-34
56521	Callaway	0	0	-20
56544	Frazee	0	12	-133
56554	Lake Park	0	5	-49
56569	Ogema	0	0	-78
56570	Osage	0	0	-37
56575	Ponsford	0	0	-60
56577	Richwood	0	0	0
56578	Rochert	0	0	-19
56591	White Earth	0	0	-5
56593	Wolf Lake	0	0	0

FAMILY CHILD CARE – BY THE NUMBERS

First Children’s Finance evaluated the current supply of family child care to identify trends that needed further examination.

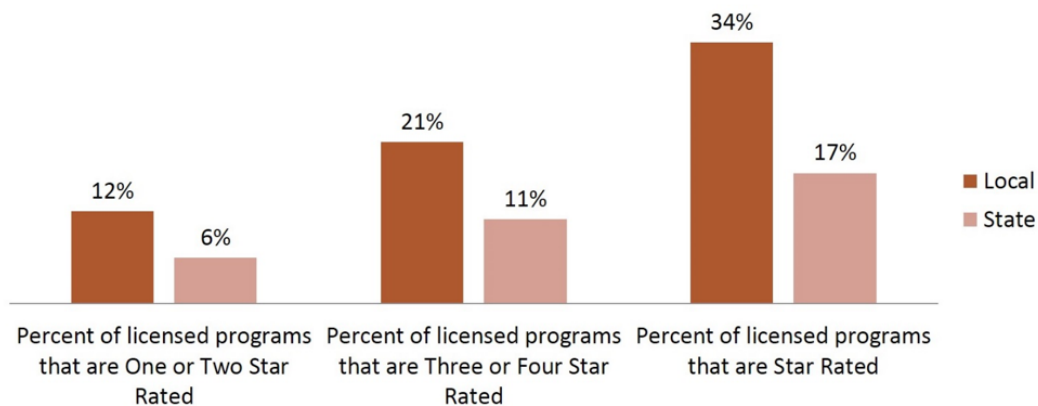
- The average length of service is lower than the state average which indicates a population of providers with shorter lengths of service
- Providers with less than 5 years of service and those with more than 20 years of service are most at risk for turnover in an industry that already sees tremendous employment turn-over rates.
- The area is ahead of the state average for family providers being located outside of their primary residences and in non-residential dwellings.

	LOCAL	STATE
Total Family Child Care Providers	72	8,156
Average Length of Service	11.6 Years	12.7 Years
Less than 5 years / Service	24/ 33.3%	2,392/ 29.3%
More than 20 years / Service	16/ 22.2%	2,231/ 27.3%
Non-Owner Occupied	2 / 2.7%	169 / 2.0%
Non-Residential Dwelling	5 / 6.9%	85 / 1.0%

QUALITY CHILD CARE OVERVIEW

First Children’s Finance examined state-wide information about the number of child care programs that are participating in the Parent Aware program. Parent Aware is Minnesota’s Quality Rating and Improvement System that identifies programs that go above and beyond the general licensing requirements to obtain higher quality in their child care programs.

PARENT AWARE IN BECKER COUNTY



The chart above demonstrates that child care providers in Becker County, MN are above the state average when it comes to Parent Aware enrollment. This is a critical component when we evaluate the quality child care program offerings in the area.

AVERAGE COST OF CHILD CARE

Child care is a large investment for families with children. A market rate survey of child care providers was conducted as part of the RCCIP to inform child care investments in the area.

The following chart shows the average cost of child care investment on a weekly basis at the 75th percentile for each age group in both a center and family child care setting. It means that 25% of child care programs charge more than the market average and 75% of child care programs charge less.

AREA MARKET RATES – BECKER COUNTY

AGE GROUP- CHILD CARE CENTER	WEEKLY RATE	ANNUAL RATE
75TH PERCENTILE - INFANT WEEKLY	\$229.00	\$11,908
75TH PERCENTILE - TODDLER WEEKLY	\$208.00	\$10,816
75TH PERCENTILE - PRESCHOOL WEEKLY	\$190.00	\$9,880
75TH PERCENTILE - SCHOOL AGE WEEKLY	\$150.00	\$7,800

AGE GROUP- FAMILY CHILD CARE	WEEKLY RATE	ANNUAL RATE
75TH PERCENTILE - INFANT WEEKLY	\$140.00	7,280
75TH PERCENTILE - TODDLER WEEKLY	\$130.00	\$6,760
75TH PERCENTILE - PRESCHOOL WEEKLY	\$125.00	\$6,500
75TH PERCENTILE - SCHOOL AGE WEEKLY	\$125.00	\$6,500

Results of the 2016 Child Care Market Rate Survey: Minnesota Child Care Provider Business Update

While rates of investment for child care are high for families, many child care operations run on very slim margins due to the high cost of quality staffing and care. Staffing is a significant expense for many child care center programs at 60-80% of overall expenses.

Family Child Care providers invest significant portions of tuition revenue back into their operations leaving providers with less than minimum wage for compensation, according to research by First Children’s Finance in 2016.

OTHER LOCAL SUPPORTING DATA

As part of the overall collection and review of data, First Children's Finance highlighted additional data outcomes that can impact third grade reading levels and local graduation rates. There are multiple studies indicate the link between early education and school readiness with third-grade reading levels and high school graduation rates. Lower achievement levels can be an early indicator of future challenges with high school graduation rates, engagement in higher education, and teen pregnancy rates.

THIRD GRADE READING LEVELS

DISTRICT	2017 PROFICIENCY RATE
Detroit Lakes #22	50.7%
Lake Park-Audubon #2889	69.6%
Frazee-Vergus #23	69.7%
Waubun-Ogema-White Earth #435	36.7%
Park Rapids #309	66.0%
Pine Point #25	NOT AVAILABLE
Menahga #821	53.5%
Statewide	57.50%

LOCAL GRADUATION RATES

DISTRICT	2017 GRADUATION RATE
Detroit Lakes #22	84.8%
Lake Park-Audubon #2889	91.70%
Frazee-Vergus #23	96.4%
Waubun-Ogema-White Earth #435	75.7%
Park Rapids #309	74.2%
Pine Point #25	NOT AVAILABLE
Menahga #821	98.1%
Statewide	82.70%

ABILITY TO PAY FOR CHILD CARE

Many families working on the lower end of the wage spectrum have difficulty paying for child care. The following charts provide an overview of local economic factors that can further impact child care:

Local Poverty Information - Becker County

Total Population Living Below Poverty Threshold in Last 12 Months	4,209
Related Children Under Age 18 Living with Income Below Poverty Threshold	1,355
Families With Related Child Under Age 5 Living Below Poverty Threshold	418

Household Income - Becker County

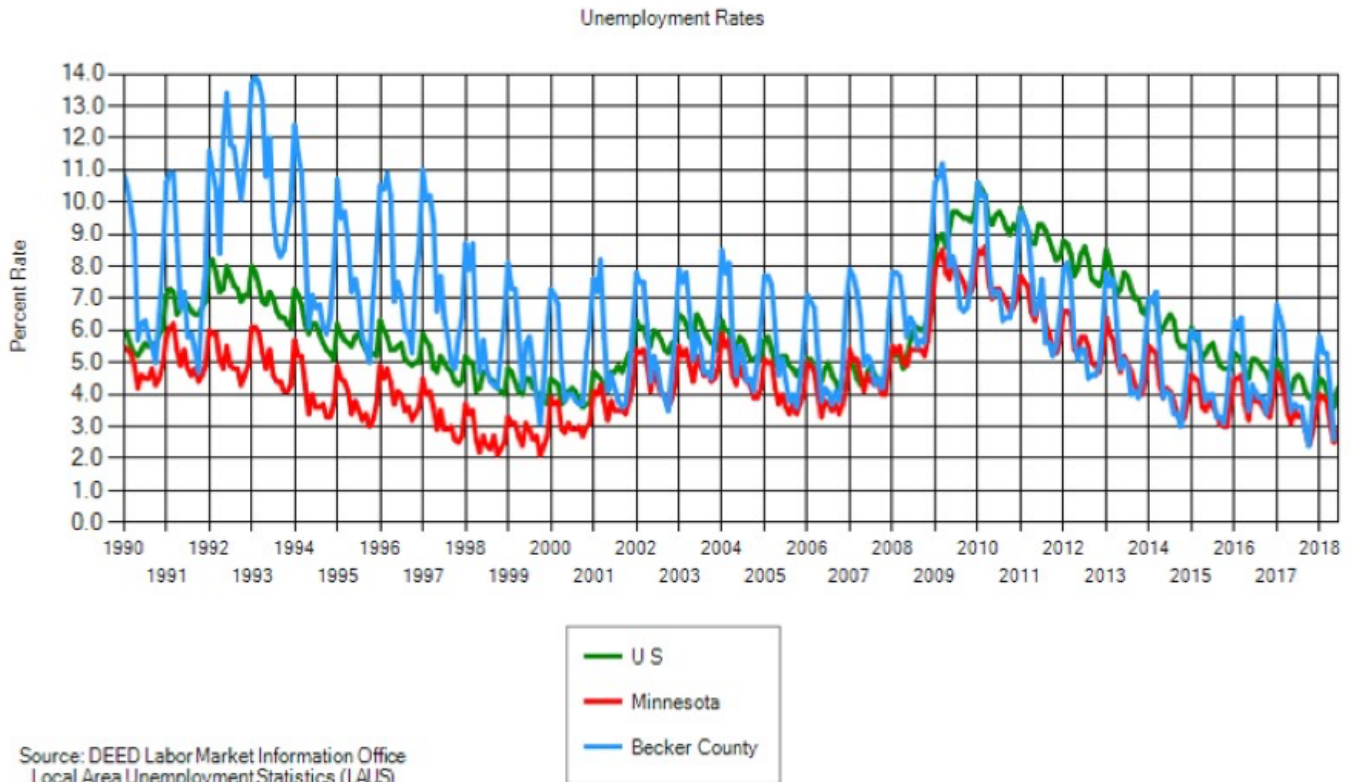
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS ACS 2009-13 ESTIMATE	13,476	% OF TOTAL POPULATION
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME LESS THAN \$10,000	883	6.6%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$10,000 TO \$14,999	898	6.7%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$15,000 TO \$24,999	1,609	11.9%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$25,000 TO \$34,999	1,473	10.9%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$35,000 TO \$49,999	1,842	13.7%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$50,000 TO \$74,999	2,906	21.6%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$75,000 TO \$99,999	1,854	13.8%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$100,000 TO \$149,999	1,339	9.9%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$150,000 TO \$199,999	373	2.8%
HOUSEHOLDS: INCOME \$200,000 OR MORE	229	2.2%
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$50,214	

Local Employment Conditions

Employment data was considered as it can be an indicator that additional child care is needed to support the employment needs of the community since there are more two-parent families employed.

Unemployment Rates – Becker County

- **2.6% Unemployment Rate**



Top Local Industries – Becker County

The largest employers were invited to participate in the child care conversation since they are impacted by absenteeism and less productivity when child care is a challenge.

INDUSTRY: EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, AND HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	3,632	23.4%
INDUSTRY: MANUFACTURING	2,122	13.7%
INDUSTRY: RETAIL TRADE	1,971	12.7%

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Extensive outreach was conducted by the Core Team to engage the community about child care. This work included one-on-one stakeholder meetings with various community leaders, parent and provider electronic surveys, focus groups and presentations about child care. Through these various inputs, the Core Team was able to better understand the underlying causes of the local child care challenges.

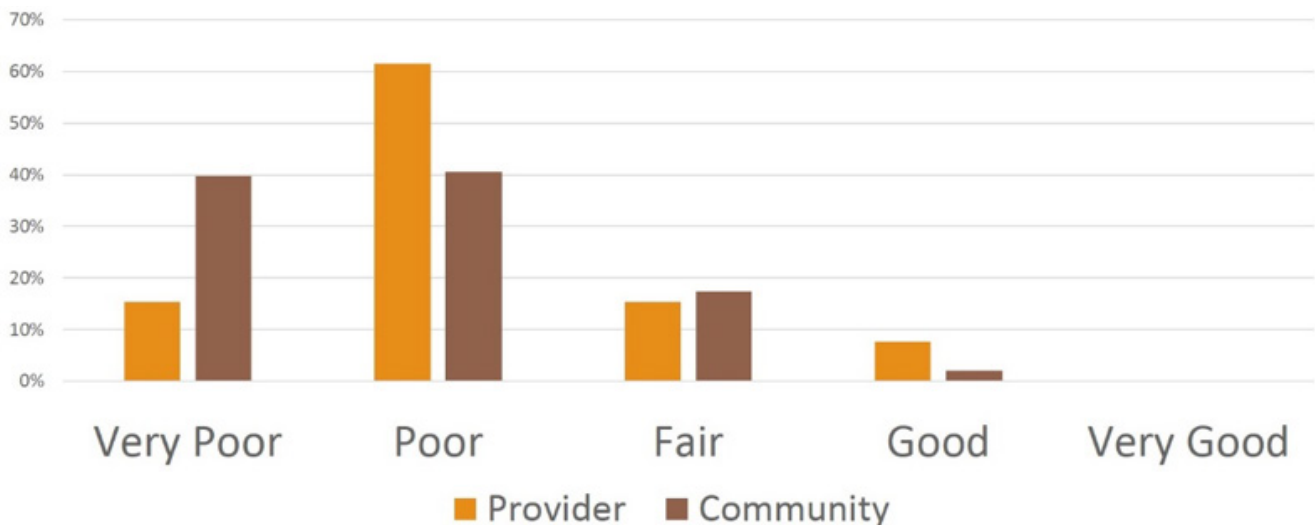


COMMUNITY SURVEYS – SELECTED PERSPECTIVES

The general community was invited to participate in a comprehensive survey about child care in Becker County. Over 780 individuals participated in the community survey and 14 providers participated in a separate survey specific for child care providers.

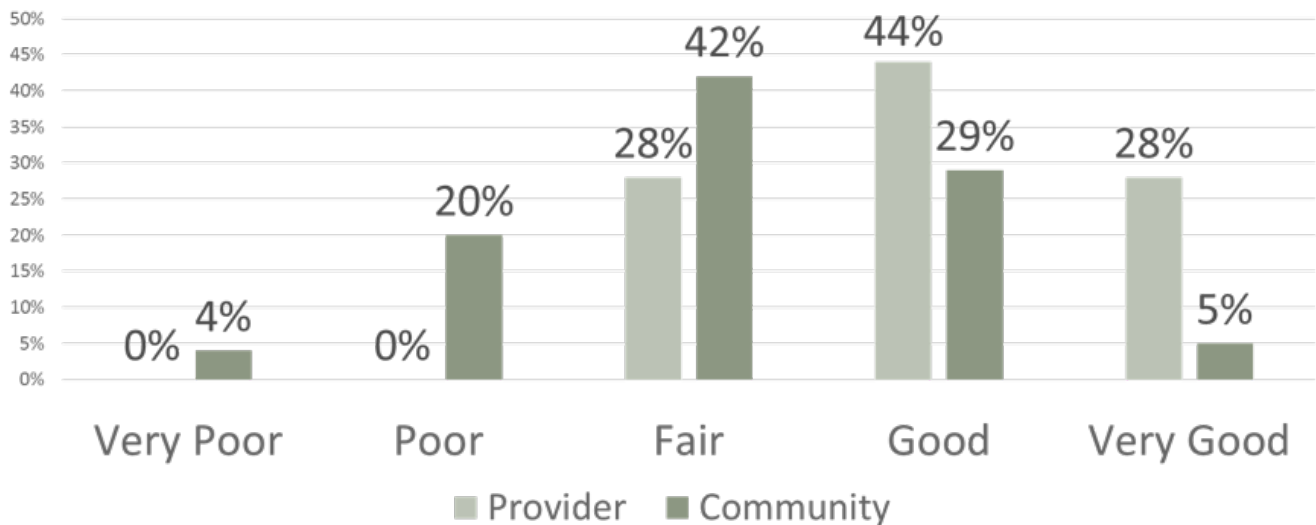
The following charts represent some highlighted perspectives within the community:

PERCEPTIONS: AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE IN THE LOCAL AREA



Survey respondents indicated that they were traveling great distances to find appropriate child care. Nearly 30% indicated that they were traveling more than 11 miles for child care.

PERCEPTIONS: QUALITY OF AVAILABLE CHILD CARE IN THE LOCAL AREA

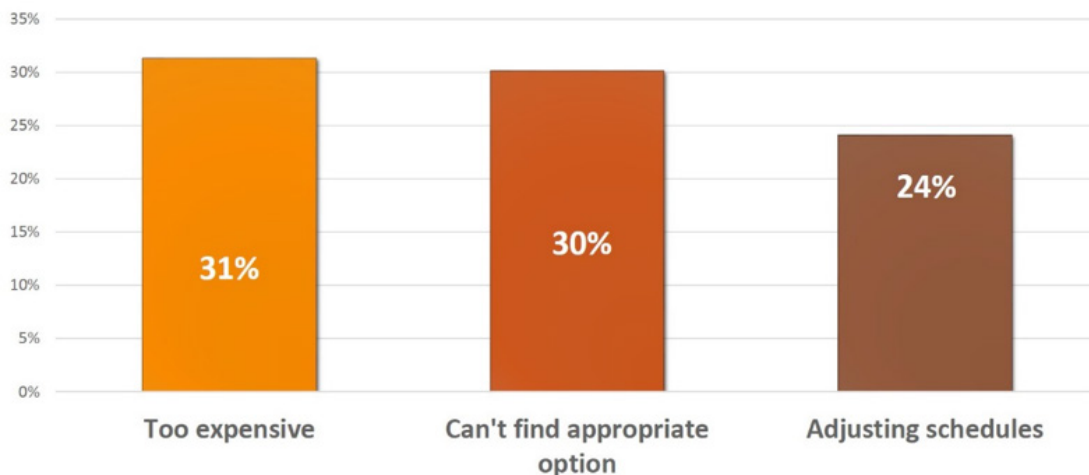


While specific questions about quality were not part of this survey, it was noted that 76% of the parent's responses state that there is fair to very good availability of high quality child care in the area. This is also shown as the participation rate of child care programs in the Parent Aware Program is higher than the state average. When survey participants were asked about what is important for them in a child care program, they ranked their preferences as follows (1 being the most important):

1. Safe and healthy environment
2. Educational curriculum
3. Licensed by DHS
4. Conveniently located
5. Provider has high level of education
6. Provider is someone I know
7. Provider is Parent Aware rated



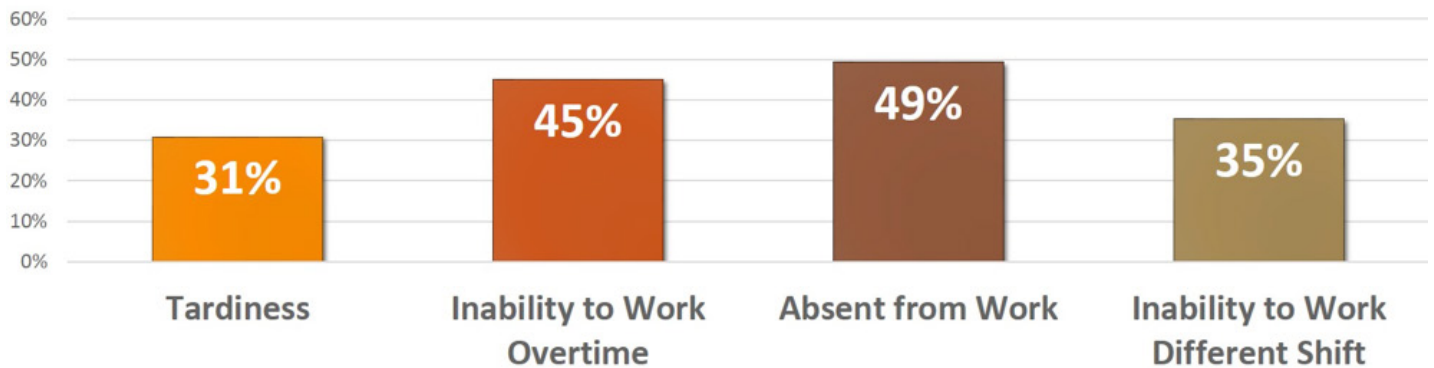
REASONS FOR NOT ENROLLING IN PAID CHILD CARE



COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS IMPACTS OF THE CHILD CARE ISSUE

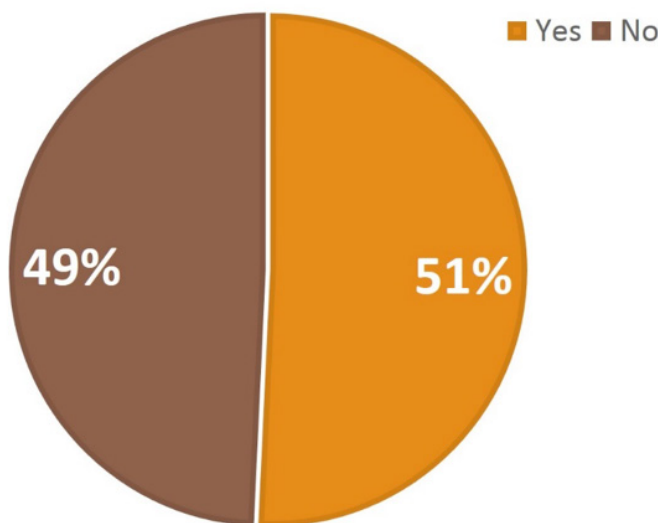
Beyond families and children, the greater community and local businesses can also be impacted by child care challenges and issues. Child care is often framed as an economic development issue by communities facing declining populations or challenges with the work force. These issues can compound and further extend into the business community by causing loss of workers due to unavailable child care or by businesses relocating to environments with better availability of care.

WORK ISSUES OCCURRED DUE TO CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



Normal work environments can be adversely impacted when child care is a challenge for employers and workers. As illustrated, the biggest impact of child care limitations include absence from work (when a provider is closed for the day), inability to work a flexible schedule or work different shifts, and tardiness to work. A study in 2004 showed the national impact of child care issues in the economy, and it was valued at over \$3 billion dollars annually.

IMPACT ON FAMILY PLANNING – BECKER COUNTY



In the survey, 51% of the respondent's stated that the lack of availability of child care is having an impact on family planning. In addition to the impact on family planning child care shortages can also impact the local employment environment. In the survey, 33% of the respondent's had withdrawn from workforce or declined employment due to child care arrangements.

UNDERSTANDING THE UNDERLYING CHALLENGES

The Core Team in Becker County spent several months investigating the underlying reasons for the local child care challenges. This work involved engaging with many members of the local area to determine the underlying causes for the identified shortage of care.

The Core Team identified the following factors impacting the child care system in Becker County:

• IT'S DIFFICULT TO BE A CHILD CARE PROVIDER

"I think providers face serious burnout from several different things:

1. We rarely hear we are doing a good job!
2. We have more and more on our plates (i.e. paperwork, trainings, regulations etc.)
3. It is very important to keep kids safe. It's a big liability to have kids in our homes. It would be great if people understood that as well." -Local Resident

- ◇ Rules and regulations
- ◇ Can't find qualified staff
- ◇ Low pay/no benefits
- ◇ Parents not paying/not able to pay
- ◇ Long hours/no flexibility
- ◇ High operating cost
- ◇ Damage to home/space
- ◇ Amount of paperwork/help with taxes
- ◇ Licensing process and understanding the paperwork is challenging
- ◇ Can't afford a helper or a sub

The challenges of being a family child care provider are well-documented and come in a variety of ways. Licensing and regulations have changed over the years along with increasing expectations around outcomes for children entering the primary school system. Many family child care providers operate their businesses with minimal business supports which can sometimes lead to issues with overall sustainability.

• AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY FOR PARENTS

"Child care is not an easy job and it's not financially sustainable. We all want great child care but can't all afford it." -Local Parent

- ◇ Employers struggle to find employees
- ◇ Scheduling challenges – changes in work hours make it challenging
- ◇ Flexible child care arrangements – families need some early mornings, evenings and weekends
- ◇ Not able to afford cost of child care
- ◇ Employers could help supplement cost of care for families
- ◇ CCAP or Early Learning Scholarships – hard programs for families and not all qualify
- ◇ Can't find infant care, school age, and summer care

There is no clear answer to the ongoing challenge of costs of care versus family investment to get quality child care. Additional support in helping families with low-to-moderate incomes become acquainted with existing support systems such as CCAP and Early Learning Scholarships can help bridge the gap. Residents indicated the desire to have more choices and quality offerings available to select from. While some of these desires were in the form of new child care center offerings, many also included enhanced offerings within existing family child care.

• LACK OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

"I cannot afford to have more than 1 child in Child Care and the availability does not mean you have a spot when you will need it." -Local Parent

- ◇ Startup costs are high
- ◇ Ongoing financial support or grants
- ◇ Local trainings, cost of trainings, and lack of available space for trainings
- ◇ Financial/tax incentives to become a provider or stay in the business
- ◇ Financial assistance for parents to afford care
- ◇ Find ways to offer benefits for providers
- ◇ Available space to have business located outside of home
- ◇ Local business support and partnerships

Like any start up business there are cost of starting and operating the business and child care businesses are no different. The costs of starting up a child care business for either family or center based care are high and is a barrier for entry and sustainability.

• LACK OF COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT

"Understanding how valuable the service we provide is....and if we aren't paid and respected for that service, there will be more providers that will quit." -Local Provider

- ◇ Lack of respect and understanding of the business – from parents and community
- ◇ Not an easy career
- ◇ Work life balance is difficult – hard for parents to adjust when providers are closed, and providers attending family activities
- ◇ Treated as a babysitter – not a professional
- ◇ Understanding what quality child care is
- ◇ Recognize one of the hardest jobs and most important job in our community

Family child care providers have a tough job – one that often comes with very few benefits and recognition. Local providers and other community organizations have an opportunity to recognize the ongoing contributions, and continuous innovation of family child care providers in the child care industry. This could be achieved through recognition programs, and other material support such as training.

• DELIVERY OF INFANT AND TODDLER CARE IS HIGHLY REGULATED AND EXPENSIVE

"I have another child on the way and I am afraid that I will have to quit work until I can find day care because of it." -Local Parent

- ◇ There aren't enough infant and toddler slots in the community

It is clear that a big part of the shortage of child care can be attributed to infant and toddler slots that are often difficult to find. Provider/staff ratios for infants and toddlers are much lower than preschool and school age children. Additional focus on ensuring these slots are created as part of larger community solutions is critical to address overall child care needs in the community.

TOWN HALL MEETING & GATHERING

The Town Hall meeting is designed to provide an opportunity for the Core Team and the community to interact and understand the findings of the extensive focus groups and surveys. Participants shared ideas about how to address the child care challenges in the local community

COMMUNITY DEVELOPED SOLUTIONS

CO-OP MODELS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Identify faith based space to host childcare
- Identify space for a co-op and identify legal structure for co-op child care models
- Attach child care into the school: child care, preschool, school in one building
- Help support new and existing providers through rules and regulations: create a position for advocacy

EMPLOYER SPONSORED CHILD CARE/PARTNERSHIPS

- Identify employer partnerships
- Shift Alignment for child care employer partnerships – align shifts between local businesses and providers

STREAMLINE CCAP REIMBURSEMENT AND GRANT MONEY FOR PROVIDERS

- Additional Funding – there is a place holder for more discussion on this idea

LICENSING & REGULATION

- Reduce regulations
- Change substitute guidelines
- Paperwork for CCAP and all paperwork reduction for providers
- Increase ratios

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/LOCAL SUPPORT

- Co-op transportation for field trips
- TIF/TIF Loan
- Utility Discount

PROVIDER SUPPORTS

- All day re-licensing and provider training
- Creating a sub list and volunteer list

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

The Town Hall meeting is an opportunity to leverage multiple view points and ideas related to addressing the local child care challenge. After the Town Hall meeting, the Core Team met to discuss all ideas and formulated an action plan to move forward. The following SMART goals were developed.

SMART GOAL ONE – SUPPORT CO-LOCATED CHILD CARE FACILITIES IN FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS, NON-PROFITS, OR BUSINESSES

CORE TEAM LEAD – Karen Pifher

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Zion Lutheran Church, True Life Church, Child Care Association, Sourcewell, Child Care Aware, First Children’s Finance, Steering Committee-organizations, ECI, MMCDC, WCI, Wild Rice, Corp Sponsors

In the next twelve months, identify spaces available in faith based organizations, non-profits, or businesses in the community to be used for new start-up center or new or existing family child care programs to run their businesses.

Expected Outcomes and Impact

The expected outcome from this work is the identification of facility arrangements to be used by existing or new, center or family based child care providers. This work supports SMART Goal One and the development of new licensed slots for center or family child care.

SMART GOAL TWO – CHILD CARE PROVIDERS WILL HAVE A CAREER PATHWAY AND ACCESS TO START UP RESOURCES FOR PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT OR CHILD CARE CENTER FACILITY MODELS

CORE TEAM LEAD – Mary Rotter

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: MState, Vern with DL Schools, Laker Prep, Child Care Association, Child Care Aware, Sourcewell, BCE, WCI

In the next 12 months, work with the local high school and others in the community to develop and implement an education/career pathways to increase the child care workforce for either center teacher qualified staff or potential new family child care providers.

Expected Outcomes and Impact

This project is focused on increasing supply of child care workforce for both family and center based programs. The primary metric is the development of a program and the number of participants.

SMART GOAL THREE – LOCAL LOW COST ONE DAY RE-LICENSING TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

CORE TEAM LEAD – Fran Rethwisch

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: ECI, WCI, Essentia, Ecumen, Child Care Aware, Child Care Association, surrounding communities (Perham etc)

In the next 12 months create a yearly, low cost/free, one day licensing training for child care providers in the Becker County area that would provide all the required mandated trainings providers need to be relicensed.

Expected Outcomes and Impact

Goal three is designed to support existing child care providers by offering free trainings that are required for relicensing. Measurement of success for this opportunity will be the number of providers attending the all-day training, provider feedback through evaluations, and overall indirect and direct costs to host the day training.

SMART GOAL FOUR – IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCES AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT NEW AND EXISTING CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

CORE TEAM LEAD – Guy Fischer

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS: Steering Committee

Within the next 12 months identify funding sources to support child care trainings, scholarships for providers to gain further education, capital costs for new startups and subsidies available to support new and existing child care providers in Becker County.

Expected Outcomes and Impact

Goal four is designed to identify local financial resources to support new and existing child care programs. Measurement of success will include the amount of dollars allocated to support child care based on criteria and number of new slots or child care providers supported.



ABOUT FIRST CHILDREN'S FINANCE

Founded in 1991, First Children's Finance is a multi-state nonprofit organization. We work with communities, and early care and education businesses to increase the supply of high quality early care and education in urban and rural areas. We do this through business management training, one-on-one consulting, and financing. For more information about First Children's Finance, please visit: www.firstchildrensfinance.org

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