

Strategic Plan for Child Care

Clayton County, Iowa

February 2024

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Prepared for:

Clayton County Foundation for the Future
Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee

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INTRODUCTION

In November 2023, First Children’s Finance (FCF) completed a *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County, Iowa, which analyzed the supply and demand for child care in Clayton County. In addition to direct surveys for input from parents, employers, and child care providers, FCF collected data from the US Census Bureau, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Iowa Workforce Development, and Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral. FCF’s analysis resulted in several key findings related to the local child care market, which are summarized in the “The Need and Demand for Quality Child Care” section of this report.

Addressing a child care shortage is a challenge that requires a community response. The challenge is how to increase the supply and availability of child care to meet the needs of the families and employers, while supporting child care businesses. As a result, a solution-based community planning process spearheaded by a child care steering committee was initiated.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To develop this *Strategic Plan for Child Care*, First Children's Finance (FCF) focused data collection and planning efforts on how business interventions and community support could address local challenges. From December 2023 to January 2024, a series of strategic planning meetings were held. To launch this process, FCF presented the key findings from the *Child Care Market Analysis*. FCF also shared *Emerging Models and Promising Practices, Successful Child Care Models*, which highlighted child care providers and communities FCF has worked with as replicable examples. At the remaining meetings, strategic planning participants engaged in exercises to develop a vision for child care in the community, and goals and strategies to address the child care challenges identified through the child care market analysis.

Child Care Steering Committee

A Child Care Steering Committee consisting of community and business representatives was formed to guide the *Child Care Market Analysis and Strategic Plan for Child Care* project. That committee assisted in distributing the child care needs surveys to employers, child care providers, and partners, and in identifying individuals to participate in the strategic planning process. Members of the steering committee for this project were:

- Darla Kelchen, countywide. Clayton County Development Group Executive Director and Clayton County Foundation for the Future Board Advisor.
- Emily Sadewasser, countywide. Clayton County Foundation for the Future Coordinator.
- Haleisa Johnson, Strawberry Point. Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Early Childhood Coordinator and co-chair of Clayton County Foundation for the Future.
- Roger Thomas, Elkader. Past state representative, past executive director of Elkader Development Corporation, past board member of Elkader Childcare and Learning Center.
- Kristina Johnson, Guttenberg. Assistant vice president of Fidelity Bank & Trust in Guttenberg, board member of Kids Kampus, and Jefferson Township clerk.
- Baili Maurer, Edgewood. Owner of Edgewood Locker.

Strategic Planning Participants

From December 2023 through February 2024, a series of sessions focused on strategic planning were held. A total of 30 individuals participated in the sessions which resulted in the creation of a vision for child care, child care goals, and strategies to achieve each goal. Participants in the sessions represented employers, government, school districts, community leaders, and child care providers.

Putting this Plan into Use

This *Strategic Plan for Child Care* represents a significant investment of community resources. To achieve the expected outcomes and impacts outlined in this plan, a Clayton County Child Care

Steering Committee will be appointed to take on the role as the leader of these efforts, which may include forming subcommittees or task forces so that additional community members or organizations become engaged, and activities and workload are distributed.

The plan and progress made to date will be reviewed annually by the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee, along with discussing strategies and action plans for the upcoming year. A matrix with a summary of the planned activities for the next 5 years is provided in the Appendix to assist with assigning and tracking activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every parent wants their child to be in a child care setting that not only meets their basic needs for safety and security, but also provides nurturance and prepares that child for school success. The late Jim Greenman, child care developer and advocate, stated: “A baby welcomed into a center today may spend up to twelve thousand hours in child care, more time than she will spend in all of elementary school and high school.” For working parents, choosing child care may be one of the most critical decisions they can make as the child care environment has lasting effects on the child.

When the *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County was completed in November 2023, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) data showed there were 613 regulated child care spaces, however as part of this study some child care providers self-reported they prefer to operate at a capacity lower than the maximum they would be allowed by HHS, and some programs only operate during the school year. Based on those two factors, FCF has determined the actual year-round usable capacity is 581. With an estimated 1,559 children likely to use regulated child care, it is reasonable to conclude there is a shortage of regulated child care spaces in Clayton County.

To address the child care shortage, a process that gathered information and data from different perspectives was used, including the results of the surveys conducted with employers, child care providers, and parents as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis*. The results were presented to strategic planning participants who then participated in a series of sessions to develop a vision, goals, and strategies with action steps to achieve those goals.

The following vision, goals, and strategies have been developed through the input and interactions with the strategic planning participants.

The vision for child care in Clayton County is:

- *Families* will have access to child care choices that provide enriching learning opportunities within quality child care programs.
- *Early childhood programs* will have the professional staff and resources necessary to deliver quality child care.
- *Communities* will recognize child care as an integral part of the community and will support child care programs, allowing them to thrive.
- *Employers* will recognize the impact of child care on the workforce and actively support quality child care solutions.

The following goals and strategies were developed for addressing child care within Clayton County:

GOAL 1- Increase the number of regulated child care spaces in Clayton County by a minimum of 48 spaces by 2029.

Strategy 1- Increase the number of registered child development homes across Clayton County.

Strategy 2- Establish a child care committee with representatives from Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana to lead efforts to increase the number of spaces within Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) registered child development homes within the three communities.

Strategy 3- Establish a child care committee for the community of Guttenberg to lead efforts to increase the number of spaces within Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) registered child development homes within the community.

Strategy 4- Explore options to expand Kids Kampus Community Child Care in Guttenberg.

GOAL 2- Increase the current and future child care labor pool of Clayton County through training and partnerships.

Strategy 1- Explore establishing a Clayton County Child Care Wage Enhancement Program.

Strategy 2- Explore options for offering the required training and work experience needed for child care staff and high school students to obtain a Child Development Associate® (CDA) Credential™.

Strategy 3- Develop a child care staff pipeline by offering part-time employment, work-study opportunities, and internships for high school and college students.

GOAL 3- Increase awareness of the need for regulated child care in Clayton County by engaging local employers and other community partners in child care solutions.

Strategy 1- Establish the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to implement this strategic plan.

Strategy 2- Inform employers and other community partners about recent child care efforts including the Child Care Market Analysis and this Strategic Plan for Child Care.

Strategy 3- Provide resources and information about child care related benefits, child care partnerships, and employer sponsored child care models to local employers.

Strategy 4- Develop and implement a campaign to increase community awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care.

Strategy 5- Provide parents access to information that will assist them in understanding, identifying, and choosing child care.

THE NEED AND DEMAND FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE

Clayton County Foundation for the Future commissioned First Children's Finance (FCF) to conduct a *Child Care Market Analysis* to analyze the supply and demand for child care in the county. Through that process, FCF collected data from the US Census Bureau, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, and input from employers, child care providers, and parents. FCF's analysis resulted in several key findings related to the local child care market, including that there is a shortage of regulated child care spaces in Clayton County. According to FCF's calculations in that analysis, the child care gap could be as high as 975 regulated child care spaces.

The following factors underlie the current and future need and demand for quality child care in Clayton County. These factors were considered by the strategic planning participants as they developed community strategies.

Market Area

The market area used for the market analysis study was Clayton County, including the individual incorporated cities and unincorporated rural areas.

Population

The US Census Bureau estimates that from 2011 to 2021, both the total population of the county and the number of children ages 0 to 11 decreased. As of 2021, the total population is 17,173 and the number of children ages 0 to 11 is 2,481.

Working Families

As of 2021, there are 7,319 total households in the Clayton County, of which 4,639 (63%) are family households, and 1,744 (24% overall) have children under the age of 18. The median annual income for families with children under the age of 18 is \$82,950.

According to the US Census Bureau as of 2021, 90% of families with children ages 0 to 5, and 95% of families with children ages 6 to 17 living in Clayton County have all parents in the labor force. All parents working means if there are two parents living in the home both work, or if the child lives with a single parent that parent is working.

Quality of Life for Residents

The child care sector serves two critical community functions. First, it is an economic driver allowing parents to work and earn income while at the same time creating jobs. Second, since the children that attend child care full-time typically spend between 35 and 50 hours per week

with a caregiver who is not their parent, child care prepares children for school and life at a critical stage of their development.

In short, the child care industry is an essential component of the community infrastructure that keeps businesses growing and keeps parents working. In addition, quality child care contributes to a higher quality of life for residents as it assures that children are experiencing the kind of care that not only is safe and nurturing but prepares them for success and for growing into healthy and contributing future citizens.

Key to a positive future includes developing infrastructure and community assets that will attract families wishing to make Clayton County their home. Child care plays an essential role in a healthy community eco-system. The expansion of quality child care can be a catalyst for building a community that is vital, thriving, and prosperous.

Quality of Care

Although there is no simple definition of quality child care, the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has recently undergone a process to better align the state's quality rating system with nationally recognized quality standards. Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K™) is Iowa's new Quality Rating and Improvement System for HHS licensed child care centers and preschools, registered child development homes, and programs operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. IQ4K provides five levels of quality (building blocks) that programs can achieve and continue to improve on. By implementing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), IQ4K allows programs to assess their current grade across all areas of programming and devise a structured plan to increase the overall level of program quality.¹

Furthermore, research shows that the early years (ages 0-5) are the most sensitive for brain development. Over 90% of brain growth occurs during this period. Once in school, students who receive quality early childhood education are more likely to graduate from high school, own a home, and have a job than their peers who did not attend preschool. Young children that spend time in safe and healthy environments that stimulate learning (i.e., quality early care and education programs) are more prepared when they start school and have long-term economic, academic and social benefits, and reduced costs to individuals and communities later on.

According to secondary research conducted by the Minneapolis Federal Reserve, the annual rate of return on each \$1 dollar spent on high quality early care and education is twelve to sixteen percent (12-16%), with the greatest returns realized among children in low-income families.

¹ Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral <https://iowaccrr.org/providers/iq4k/>

Child care requires an investment. The delivery of quality child care is a *business issue and a business challenge for child care providers*. A commitment to delivering quality care that results in quality learning outcomes for children requires significant resources for child care businesses. Low classroom staff to child ratios, age-appropriate curriculum, teacher training and improved teacher qualifications, physical environment improvements, and more – all result in increased costs. An investment in the sustainability of existing child care providers that are committed to quality, is an investment in child care now and into the future.

Child Care as a Business Issue

As we look into the future through the lens of national, state, and local social and economic trends, the greatest hope for sustainable child care, particularly quality child care, rests in the community's ability to *develop strong child care businesses* and to *diversify the dollars going into supporting them* through both *public and private sector engagement and investment*.

The business community has a stake in child care. Businesses, communities, and regional economies all benefit from short-term and longer-term benefits of quality child care:

- Employee retention and decreased turnover;
- More productive employees, who know their children are receiving quality care;
- Ability to attract and keep the best employees and a younger workforce;
- Increased employment and career advancement opportunities at growing child care businesses;
- Spin-off jobs as a result of the multiplier effect of child care business development and retention;
- Less remedial expense as children are prepared to be successful in school;
- Sharp reductions in public expenditures on criminal justice, welfare and other remedial services; and
- A well-prepared future workforce: the essential bedrock of regional economic growth.

An immediate cost that impacts families and child care businesses is child care employee turnover. "Studies by American Management Association and others report a range between 25 percent and 250 percent of annual salary per exiting employee. Entry-level, unskilled positions are at the lower end of the cost range, while executive, managerial and sales positions are at the higher end."² A 2006 article by Saratoga, a service offering of PricewaterhouseCoopers, lists the following turnover costs and consequences:

² Spremulli, Michael. (2011, June 22). *Employee Turnover on the Rise*. Retrieved from <http://www.chrysaliscorporation.com/employee-turnover-on-the-rise/>

- Lost productivity during a vacancy.
- Diminished productivity of the team and managers who are covering for a vacant position.
- Diminished productivity of the team and managers who are training the new hire.
- Increased labor costs due to overtime or contractor's needs.
- Hiring and onboarding costs.
- More difficult to quantify impacts may include decreased customer satisfaction, increased future turnover, and loss of institutional knowledge.

Combined, these turnover-related costs represented more than 12% of pre-tax income for the average company.³

Business Investment in Child Care

There are multiple opportunities for businesses to invest in child care, meeting both the employee and employer needs, while also promoting a positive image of their business in the community. Employers can support their workers by investing in child care. Support of individual child care businesses can come in multiple forms. First Children's Finance believes the following examples are all viable options:

- Sponsor spaces within a child care center(s) or home(s). These spaces are then reserved for that business's employees.
- Fund a child care scholarship that is available to employees whose income exceeds the Iowa child care assistance income threshold, but still struggle to afford child care. This could be in the form of a reimbursement and may provide different levels of support for families with different incomes.
- Business or corporate giving grants or community investment funds.
- Donate space for on-site child care that is available to both employees and the community.
- Invest in building a child care facility that bears the corporate or business name.

All contributions, at various levels of support are needed, recognized as significant, and promote a positive image of the business or corporation providing that gift or support.

³*Driving the Bottom Line: Improving Retention*. Copyright © PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 2006. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/Documents/saratoga-improving-retention.pdf>

Child Care Market Analysis Key Findings

Most notably, the child care market analysis showed there is a need for more *regulated* child care in Clayton County. According to the US Census Bureau, there are an estimated 1,631 children ages 0 to 11 in the county. First Children’s Finance estimates, 1,317 of those are from families that want to use HHS regulated child care, either a licensed center or a registered child development home. As of November 2023, there are 374 regulated child care spaces, however when adjusted for providers’ self-reported operating preference, and programs that only operate during the school year, that drops to 304 usable year-round spaces. This means the deficit for regulated child care could be as high as 1,013 spaces.

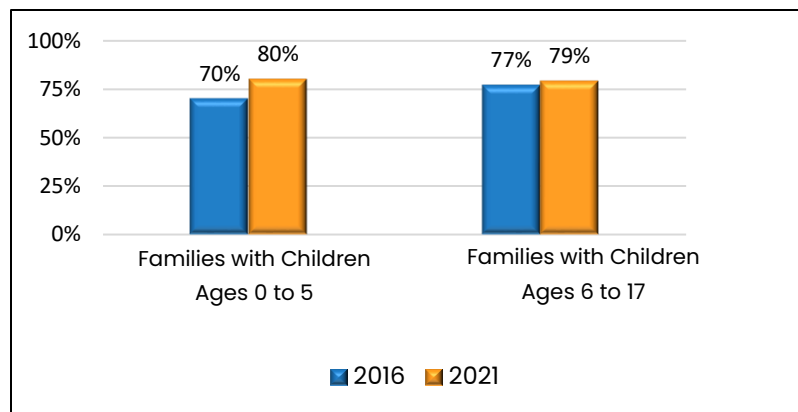
Based on the data and research from the *Child Care Market Analysis* that was completed for Clayton County in November 2023, First Children’s Finance identified the following key findings:

Finding 1: The Percentage of Families with All Parents in the Labor Force is Increasing

According to the US Census Bureau the percentage of families with all parents in the labor force has been increasing. All parents in the labor force means if a family is headed by a couple, both parents are working and if it is headed by a single parent that parent is working. With more parents working, it is reasonable to assume this would create an increased demand for child care.

As of 2021, 80% of families with children ages 0 to 5, and 79% of families with children ages 6 to 17 living in Clayton County have all parents in the labor force. In 2016, those percentages were 70% and 77% respectively.

Comparison on Families with All Parents in the Labor Force

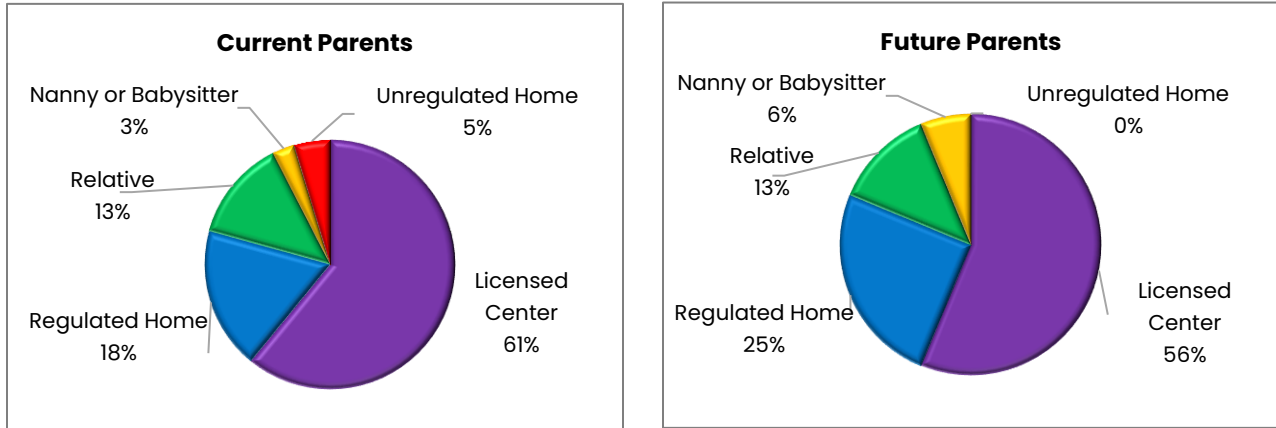


Finding 2: Parents Want Center-Based Child Care that is Available Full-Time and Year-Round

Through the child care needs surveys completed by parents in September and October of 2023, parents were asked several questions about their child care needs and preferences. The most

preferred child care arrangement chosen by both current and future parents was a licensed child care center, followed by registered child development home. Overall, 79% of parents (both current parents and future parents combined) prefer a setting that is regulated by Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), either a licensed center or a registered home.

Parents' Preferred Child Care Setting



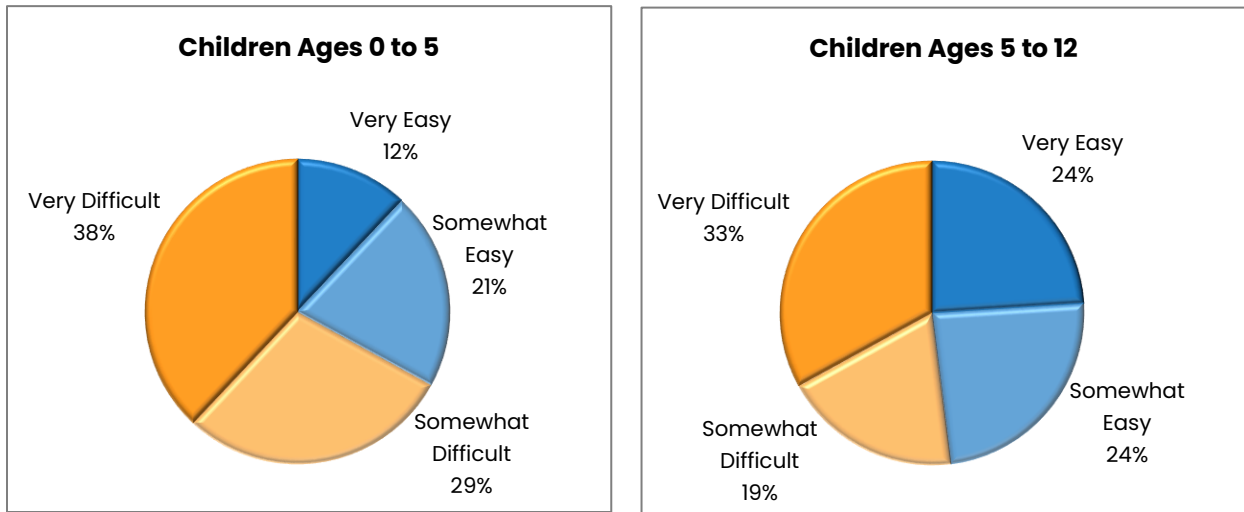
When asked if they were selecting child care today, parents indicated they would prefer to drop-off between 7:00 am and 7:59 am (54%) and pick up between 5:00 pm and 5:59 pm (28%) or 4:00 pm and 4:59 pm (24%), Monday through Friday (88%–97% per day). Separately parents were asked when they prefer to use care based on the age of their children. A majority of current parents prefer year-round care for their children, regardless of age. Among future parents, the majority prefers year-round care for children ages 0 to 5, but anticipate using child care only during the summer when their children are age 5 to 12.

Finding 3: Parents that Look for Child Care are Having Difficulty

Current parents were asked if they had looked for child care in the last 12 months. Eighty-five (85) parents indicated they had looked for care for children ages 0 to 5, and 28 parents indicated they had looked for care for children ages 5 to 12. Among those looking for care for ages 0 to 5, 67% indicated they experienced some level of difficulty—either somewhat difficult (29%) or very difficult (38%). And among the those that looked for care for ages 5 to 12, 52% indicated they experienced some level of difficulty—either somewhat difficult (19%) or very difficult (33%).

Obstacles named by parents were almost exclusively related to preferred providers not having any openings and their children being placed on a waitlist.

Ability to Find Child Care During Last 12 Months

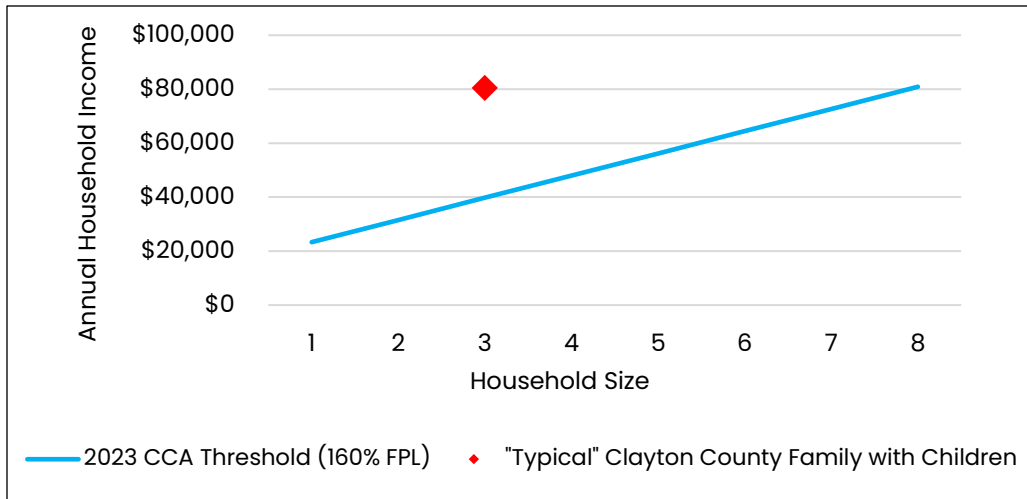


Finding 4: Median Family Income is Higher than the Child Care Assistance Threshold

The median annual income for families in Clayton County with children under the age of 18 is \$80,392. To be eligible to initially qualify for tuition assistance under the Iowa Child Care Assistance (CCA) program a family's income must not exceed 160% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL), or 200% if they have a child with special needs. Once approved a family's income is checked annually, and they continue to be eligible if their income does not exceed 225% of FPL. According to the federally determined poverty threshold that went into effect January 2023, 160% FPL for a household of 3 is \$39,776, and for a household of 4 it is \$48,000. And when it comes to families that are already approved for CCA, they would exceed the income limit if their household income is over \$55,935 for a household of 3, and \$67,500 for a household of 4. While many households with children in Clayton County exceed these incomes, comments provided through the child care needs survey indicate some families still struggle to pay for child care expenses out of pocket.

The following figure plots the median income of households with children under 18 within Clayton County using the family size of 3 (rounding the average of 2.84). The diagonal line shows 160% FPL by household size. The gap between the median income for a family with children in the area (\$80,392) and 160% FPL for a family of 3 (\$39,776) is easily visible by comparing the red diamond which represents the local median family income and the blue line directly below the diamond which represents 160% FPL for a household of 3.

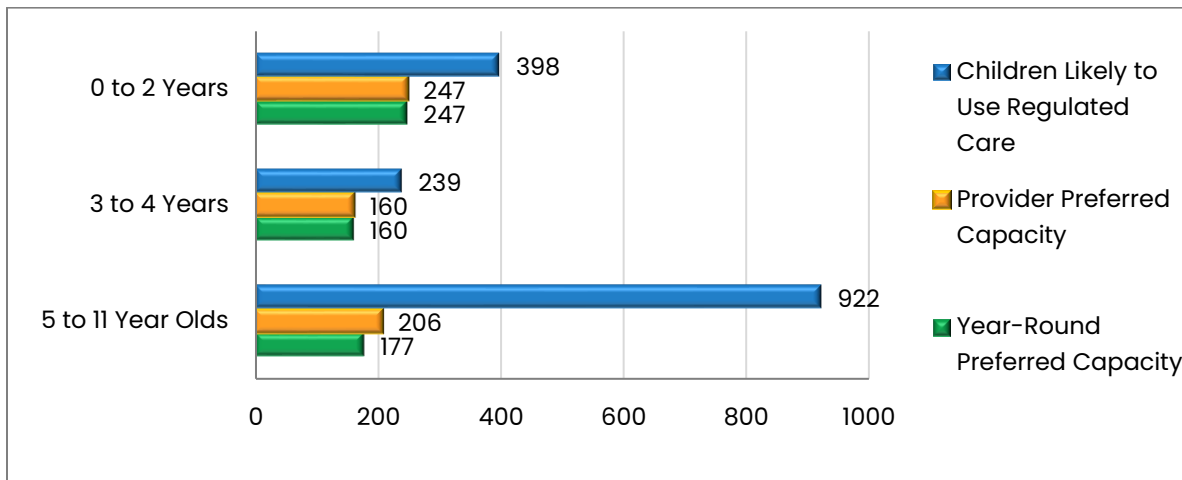
Child Care Assistance Threshold vs. Median Income of Families with Children



Finding 5: There is a Shortage of Child Care Spaces Among All Age Groups

There are an estimated 2,481 children ages 0 to 11 living in Clayton County. Based on the percentage of families that have all parents working, and parents’ preferences of child care settings, First Children’s Finance estimates 1,559 children are from families who prefer and are likely to use an Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulated child care setting. According to Iowa HHS, there are 613 regulated spaces of which 581 are available year-round plus an additional 32 spaces that are available during the summer only. There are enough spaces to serve approximately 37% of the children whose parents need full-time, year-round care in order to work. That means the child care gap could be as high as 975 spaces. When broken down by age group, it can be determined there is a shortage of 151 spaces for children ages 0 to 2, a shortage of 79 spaces for ages 3 and 4, and a shortage of 745 spaces for school age children during the school year, and 716 spaces for school age children during the summer.

Children Need Care vs. Child Care Spaces



Finding 6: Over One-Quarter of Parents are Experiencing Limited Employment Due to Child Care Challenges

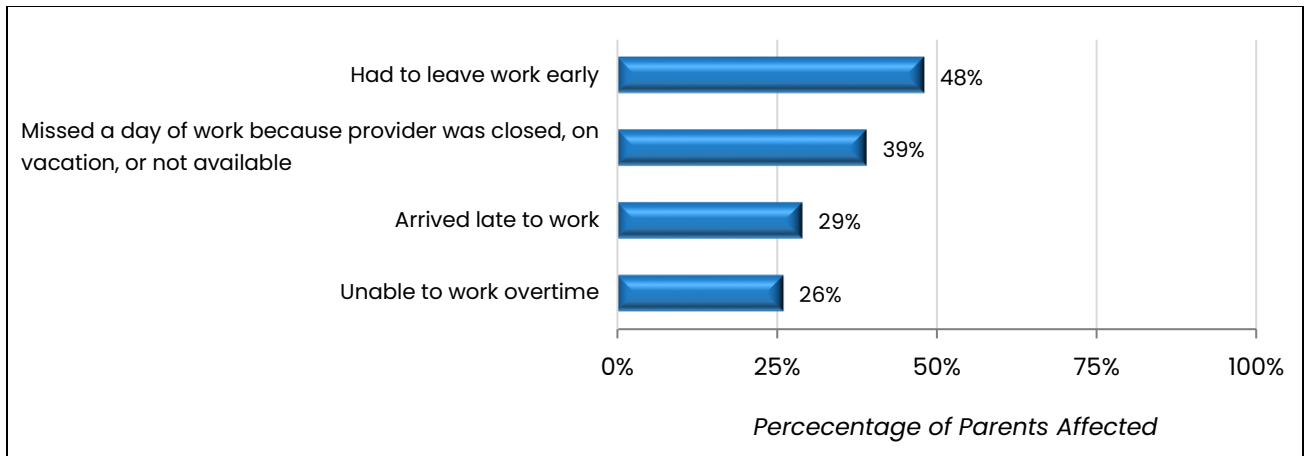
Through the child care needs survey conducted as part of this study, parents were asked if child care challenges are currently limiting their or their spouse's or partner's employment (ex. working part-time when full-time preferred, or not working within preferred field). Twenty-six percent (26%) answered yes. Those parents were asked to explain, some of the comments received were:

- *I work part-time so I can work from home and my one-year-old can stay home. My older son is in preschool. My husband works second shift so he can be with the baby in the morning while I work.*
- *Limited times that daycares are open due to being short-staffed, so we have to work around those hours, but still pay the same rate.*
- *My husband's ability to do things for his job has been limited to very specific hours of the day that can hinder opportunities because he has to wait for me to be home from work to do certain things pertaining to his job.*
- *I work reduced hours due to childcare.*
- *Cannot work before 7:00 am because daycares don't open early enough and there's only one daycare in Edgewood.*
- *Could be making twice the income and working in specific field of education if able to find child care.*
- *We cannot both work evenings because someone has to be home before 5:00. Also, effects abilities to work weekends.*
- *I am self-employed and able to pick my own hours, however I am limited to part-time availability due to childcare restraints. If I had dependable, full-time childcare I could see more clients in a week thus providing extra income for my family.*
- *Working as needed when full-time is desired.*

Finding 7: Parents Indicate Child Care is Affecting their Job

Over the last 12 months, parents have experienced child care challenges that have in turn affected their job. The adverse effects experienced by at least one-quarter of the parents that participated in the child care needs survey were: had to leave work early (48%), missed a day of work because provider was closed, on vacation, or not available (39%), arrived late to work (29%), and unable to work overtime (26%).

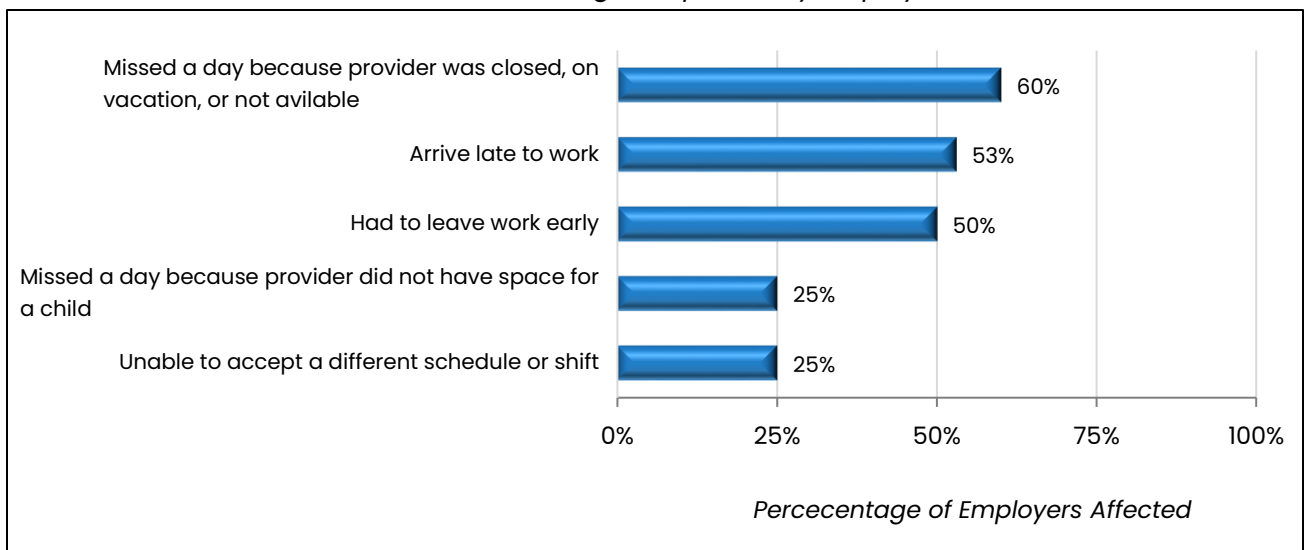
Most Common Effects of Child Care Challenges Reported by Parents



Finding 8: Local Businesses Indicate Child Care Challenges are Affecting their Employees

Over the last 12 months, employers have been impacted by the adverse effects their employees experienced because of child care challenges. The effects experienced by at least one-quarter of employers were, employees missing at least one day of work because their child care provider was closed, sick, or on vacation which was experienced by 60% of employers, employees arriving late to work which was experienced by 53% of employers, employees having to leave work early which was experienced by 50% of employers, employees missed at least one day of work because the child care provider did not have room or a space for a child which was experienced by 25% of employers, and employees were unable to accept a different schedule of shift which was also experienced by 25% of employers.

Most Common Effects of Child Care Challenges Reported by Employers



Finding 9: Child Care Providers are Willing to Expand

Child care providers that participated in the child care needs survey were asked about their willingness to expand and serve more children. Six (6) centers and 1 home said yes. Providers were asked to explain how they could expand if they answered yes. Comments received were all from centers:

- *We would expand if we had grant funding to expand our building and we were sure we could staff more classrooms.*
- *There are more rooms in our building, although they would need renovated to be approved for care. (water added, flooring, windows)*
- *Due to our limited space and not enough funding, it would be a great opportunity to be able to build a second location that would allow more capacity to hold more children. Unfortunately, we've expanded all that the ground will allow.*
- *It would be great for our community if we were able to expand and provide quality care for more children at an affordable rate.*

Providers were asked to be more specific as to the support they would need in order to be able to expand to serve more children. The responses indicated most child care programs would need funding for new or larger facilities, to possibly relocate, help recruiting more staff, and finding ways to pay better wages to keep staff.

THE FUTURE OF CHILD CARE IN CLAYTON COUNTY

Vision for Child Care

The following vision for child care was developed through input and interactions with the strategic planning participants. This vision will help guide the future of child care in Clayton County.

Families will have access to child care choices that provide enriching learning opportunities within quality child care programs.

Early childhood programs will have the professional staff and resources necessary to deliver quality child care.

Communities will recognize child care as an integral part of the community and will support child care programs, allowing them to thrive.

Employers will recognize the impact of child care on the workforce and actively support quality child care solutions.

To accomplish this vision means a focus on and resources committed to:

- Educating parents, businesses, and the community on the value and importance of quality child care.
- Creating more spaces within regulated child care environments.
- Recruiting and developing child care professionals that provide a variety of child care options.
- Providing child care business development opportunities to assure viability and sustainability of existing and new child care programs.
- Developing local resources to assist parents in finding and accessing quality child care.

Every parent wants their child to be in a child care setting that not only meets their basic needs for safety and security, but also provides nurturance and prepares that child for school success. The late Jim Greenman, child care developer and advocate, stated: "A baby welcomed into a center today may spend up to twelve thousand hours in child care, more time than she will spend in all of elementary school and high school." For working parents, choosing child care may be one of the most critical decisions they can make as the child care environment has lasting effects on the child. Finding child care is a challenge; options for quality, regulated child care that

meets the needs and preferences of families is even more challenging. Community and business leaders, all want the same thing – quality, affordable child care that meets the needs of families, employers, and the community as a whole – not only today, but into the future. From the beginning, the intention of this project was to develop a community-wide solutions-based plan for the expansion of *quality* child care, not to just add more child care spaces.

Key Assumptions for Expanding Child Care

The expansion of quality child care carries with it some key planning assumptions. These assumptions will guide the implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Child Care* for existing and new quality child care.



Commitment to program quality- All child care programs that choose to participate in child care expansion efforts and receive incentives (should any be made available) and other resources, will commit to quality. This commitment includes training, curriculum enhancement, and other business and classroom standards, including being a licensed center or registered child development home with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.



Serve all ages- The current child care shortage includes a shortage of infant and toddler care (under age 2), which is more costly to provide than care for older children, due to lower staff to child ratios. Provider participation in the child care expansion effort means a commitment to provide care to infants and toddlers, as well as other ages of children.



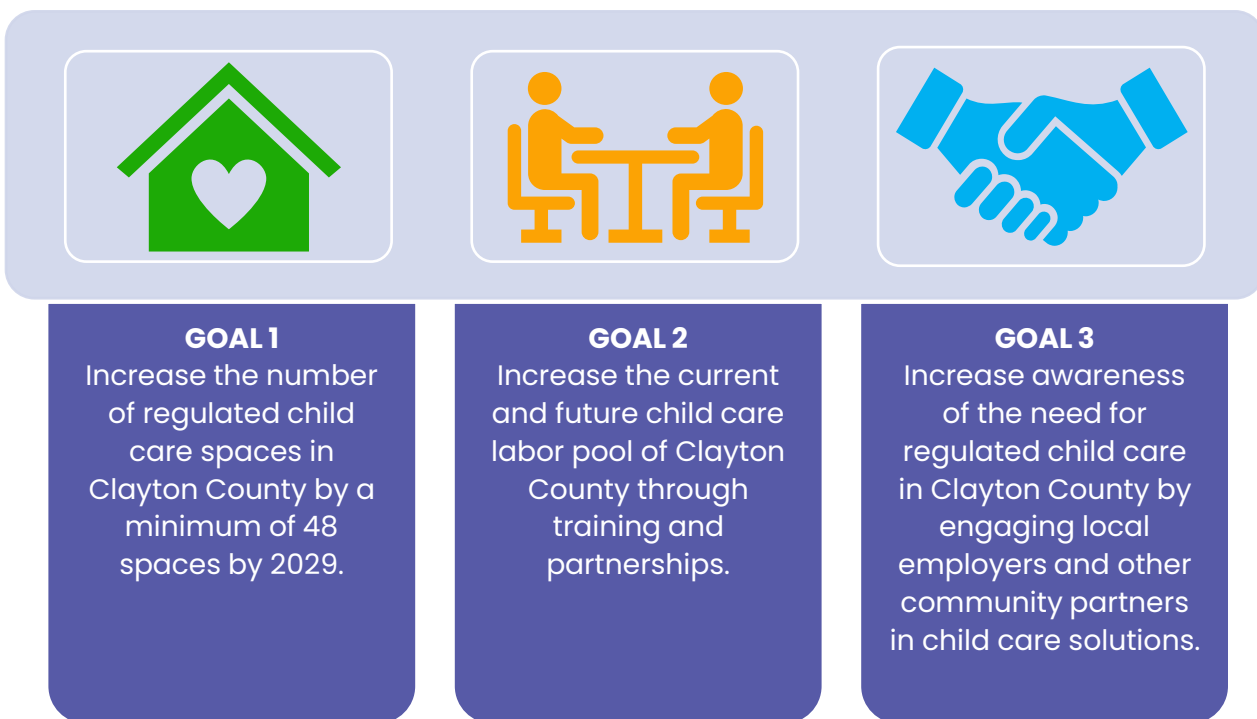
Meet quality requirements in physical environments- There exists a direct link between the quality of the physical environments and quality in the classroom practices. To the degree possible in existing child care and always in new development of child care, attention will be given to quality child care physical environments – facilities and playgrounds, including meeting (or exceeding) standards as a licensed center or registered child development home as set by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.



New child care development needs to promote community-building- New child care development carries with it an opportunity to use development and design models that build a sense of community and become desirable community assets for the long term.

CHILD CARE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The strategic planning process is an opportunity to leverage multiple viewpoints and ideas related to addressing the child care challenges identified through the 2023 *Child Care Market Analysis* of Clayton County, including the child care needs surveys completed by employers, child care providers, and parents. Through a series of strategic planning meetings, participants engaged in activities and conversations to develop these goals and strategies to address the child care challenges across the county.



GOAL 1

Increase the number of regulated child care spaces in Clayton County by a minimum of 48 spaces by 2029.

In Clayton County there are 2,481 children ages 0 to 11. Of those, First Children’s Finance (FCF) estimates 1,973 have all parents working and 1,559 are from families that prefer to use an Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulated child care setting. According to HHS, as of October 2023 there were 613 spaces in regulated child care settings (centers and homes), with 581 of those available during the school year and 613 available during the summer. With 1,559 children needing care and only 581 spaces available year-round, the child care gap could be as high as 975 spaces.

Through the parent surveys conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County, it was determined that 61% of current parents and 56% of future parents prefer to use an HHS licensed center, while 18% of current parents and 25% of future parents prefer to use an HHS registered child development home.

There are several forms of early care and education available in Iowa to meet each family's varying needs and preferences. In Iowa, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) oversees programs that fall into three categories—Licensed Centers, Registered Child Development Homes, and Child Care Homes. The level of regulation and requirements placed on the provider varies among the three categories.

Licensed Centers

Licensed Centers include child care centers (including child care programs operated by school districts), preschool programs, and Head Start. A center can care for larger groups of children, which are typically separated by age groups according to specific staff-to-child ratios. All centers are required to have an Iowa HHS inspection prior to opening and an unannounced annual inspection after that. A center must renew their license every two years. A licensed center may apply for a Child Care Assistance Provider Agreement and may participate in the voluntary Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K) quality rating improvement system.

Registered Child Development Homes (a.k.a. Registered Homes)

Anyone caring for more than 6 children at a time (including their own children) is required to apply for registration with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Registered child development homes can provide care for up to 8, 12 or 16 children at a time depending on the registration level and the exact ages of the children present at any given time⁴. Registration levels A, B, or C are based on the providers' experience and if there are any assistants or co-providers present. These programs are required to have an Iowa HHS inspection prior to opening and an unannounced annual inspection after that. A child development home must reapply for registration every two years. A child development home may apply for a Child Care Assistance Provider Agreement and may participate in the voluntary ChildNet program and may participate in the voluntary Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K) quality rating improvement system.

Child Care Homes

Child Care homes can care for 6 or fewer children (including their own children) at any given time. These programs are not required to register but have the option to do so. A Child Care Home may apply for a Child Care Assistance (CCA) Provider Agreement. A child care home must

⁴ When there are children 24 months or younger present, the provider may not be able to care for the maximum number they are approved for.

reapply to HHS every two years to continue their agreement for CCA. Child Care Homes serving children eligible for child care assistance must complete an unannounced inspection once per year to assure compliance with health, safety, and fire standards. These providers are not eligible to participate in ChildNet or IQ4K.

Strategy 1- Increase the number of registered child development homes across Clayton County.

Through the parent survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County, it was determined that 18% of current parents and 25% of future parents prefer to use an Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) registered child development home. In Clayton County there are 4 registered child development homes with a collective capacity of 43 spaces. Those homes are located in Guttenberg (1 @ 16 capacity), Luana (1 @ 12 capacity), Mc Gregor (1 @ 12 capacity), and Monona (1 @ 12 capacity). There are also 2 registered child development homes in Postville in Allamakee County, with a collective capacity of 24 spaces (2 @ 12 capacity).

New regulated child care spaces within home-based child care can be established in three ways:

1. Already operating registered child development home providers change their registration to a different level, assuming the provider has the experience and space.
2. Non-registered home providers that are providing unregulated child care become registered with HHS.
3. Individuals not currently providing child care start a new child care business as a registered child development home.

Strategic planning participants from Garnavillo, Guttenberg, Luana, Monona, and Postville all indicated they would like to focus efforts on increasing spaces within registered child development homes through both recruiting new registered child development homes and encourage existing level B registered home providers to change their registration to level C2, increasing their capacity from 12 to 16 children.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will encourage each community, or groups of communities, in Clayton County to form their own child care committee to partner with the county-wide steering committee to implement this strategy.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will compile information to share with individuals not currently providing care that might be interested, currently non-registered

home-based child care providers, and already registered home providers that may wish to increase their capacity. Information and resource providers may include:

- Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)- When registration is required, the benefits of registration, and contact information for individuals to receive assistance with the registration process. Benefit information may include the ability to access state and federally funded programs like Child Care Assistance, Child Care WAGE\$, and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- HAWC Partnerships for Children of Northeast Iowa- Information on the *Business Investment Program (BIP)* grant for costs related to startup, expansion of a child care program, and to help a child care program that wishes to participate in quality initiatives such as Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K) cover costs associated with making improvements for that program.
- Local funding and small business incentives that can be used to start new or expanding existing child care programs, including who to contact for more information.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will use social media and local websites to increase the awareness of the community and non-registered child care providers as to when registration is required, and the benefits and opportunities that are available to providers that are registered with HHS, including access to funding programs and being included on CCR&R's parent referral list.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will share the information compiled through this strategy with the local child care committees and communities across Clayton County to share or post on their website.
- A member of the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will contact CCR&R to discuss options for those interested in becoming a registered child development home to participate in "*Child Care Ready*". Child Care Ready is a professional development series that includes coaching, mentorship, and best practices for individual child care professionals. The educational series offers all of the pre-certification training required to start a registered home child care business, including: Essentials Preservice Series, Mandatory Reporter Training, CPR/First Aid, Business Practices to Consider, Emergency Preparedness Training, and follow-up support. Participating providers also have the opportunity to work on the following requirements for becoming a registered child development home either through the classes or with a consultant: application process, fingerprinting (18 & older), background check (14 & older), telephone requirements, and pre-inspection checklist.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will compile a list of currently operating non-registered child care providers. When contacted the individuals would be given the information compiled through this strategy and encouraged to connect with CCR&R for assistance to become a registered child development home. The Clayton

County Child Care Steering Committee will provide this information to the communities that establish their own local child care committee. For communities that do not have their own committee, the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will either find another local representative or have a member of the steering committee contact each of the individuals identified.

- If members of the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee become aware of an individual interested in becoming a home-based child care provider, expanding their existing registered child development home, or improving the quality of their home-based child care program, the committee member will connect the individual with CCR&R for assistance.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeated annually)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will review and update the list of non-regulated child care providers identified in year 1 and repeat the process of contacting the child care committees in the local communities or contacting the providers directly, to encouragement the providers to become registered.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

As of October 2023, there were 4 registered child development homes with a collective capacity of 43 spaces. The strategic planning participants set a target of 4 new registered child development homes. A new registered home would likely qualify as a level A, allowing a maximum capacity of 8 children, therefore a total of 32 new regulated child care spaces would be created across Clayton County. If the original 43 spaces are retained and 32 new spaces are created, there will be a total of 75 spaces within registered child development homes by 2029.

Strategy 2- Establish a child care committee with representatives from Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana to lead efforts to increase the number of spaces within Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) registered child development homes within the three communities.

Through the parent survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County, it was determined that 18% of current parents and 25% of future parents prefer to use an HHS registered child development home. According to the same analysis, there are 192 children living in Monona that are likely to use child care and 99 regulated child care spaces, including 1 registered child development home (level B) with a capacity of 12. In Farmersburg there are 50 children likely to use regulated child care and no regulated child care spaces. In Luana there are 34 children likely to use regulated child care and 1 registered child development home (level B) with a capacity of 12.

Anyone caring for more than 6 children at a time is required to register with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Registered child development homes can care for a maximum of 8 (level A), 12 (level B), or 16 (level C2) children at a time depending on the ages of the children present. Registration levels are based on the providers' experience and if there are any co-providers or assistants present.

A local child care committee will be formed to lead efforts to increase the number of regulated child care spaces within HHS registered child development homes in Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana. This local committee will work in partnership with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee. The local committee will focus on increasing regulated spaces within in homes in three ways, by establishing new registered homes, by assisting currently non-registered home-based child care to become registered child development homes, and by encouraging existing registered child development homes to change their registration type to increase their capacity, if they are eligible and have the space to do so.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will provide the local child care committee with information compiled as part of Strategy 1 of this goal, including the names of non-registered child care providers and information to share with those providers.
- The members of the local child care committee will contact each of the individuals identified through Strategy 1 of this goal, to share information and encourage them to connect with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) for assistance to become a registered child development home.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, and annually)

- The local child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in the community by providing relevant information to potential child care providers, already operating home non-registered providers that may become registered, and to already registered home providers that might change their registration type to increase capacity.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

As of October 2023, there was 1 registered child development home in Monona and 1 in Luana, which combined offer 24 spaces. A new registered home would likely qualify as a level A, which has a maximum capacity of 8 children. If at least 1 of the target 4 new registered child development homes from Strategy 1 of this goal, the rest would be 8 additional spaces within the

communities of Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana. If the original 24 spaces are retained and 8 new spaces are created, there will be a total of 32 spaces within registered child development homes by 2029.

Strategy 3- Establish a child care committee for the community of Guttenberg, to lead efforts to increase the number of spaces within Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) registered child development homes within the community.

Through the parent survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis* for Clayton County, it was determined that 18% of current parents and 25% of future parents prefer to use an HHS registered child development home. According to the same analysis, there are 87 children living in Guttenberg that are likely to use child care and 83 regulated child care spaces within 3 child care programs, of which 1 is registered child development home with a capacity of 16, the maximum allowed.

Anyone caring for more than 6 children at a time is required to register with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Registered child development homes can care for a maximum of 8 (level A), 12 (level B), or 16 (level C2) children at a time depending on the ages of the children present. Registration levels are based on the providers' experience and if there are any co-providers or assistants present.

Anyone caring for more than 6 children at a time is required to register with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Registered child development homes can care for a maximum of 8 (level A), 12 (level B), or 16 (level C2) children at a time depending on the ages of the children present. Registration levels are based on the providers' experience and if there are any co-providers or assistants present.

A local child care committee will be formed to lead efforts to increase the number of regulated child care spaces within HHS registered child development homes in Guttenberg. This local committee will work in partnership with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee. The local committee will focus on increasing regulated spaces within in homes in three ways, by establishing new registered homes, by assisting currently non-registered home-based child care to become registered child development homes, and by encouraging existing registered child development homes to change their registration type to increase their capacity, if they are eligible and have the space to do so.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will provide the local child care committee with information compiled as part of Strategy 1 of this goal, including the names of non-registered child care providers and information to share with those providers.
- The members of the Guttenberg Child Care Committee will contact each of the individuals identified through Strategy 1 of this goal, to share information and encourage them to connect with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) for assistance to become a registered child development home.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- The local child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in the community by providing relevant information to potential child care providers, already operating home non-registered providers that may become registered, and to already registered home providers that might change their registration type to increase capacity.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

As of October 2023, there was 1 registered child development home in Guttenberg which offers the maximum 16 spaces. A new registered home would likely qualify as a level A, which has a maximum capacity of 8 children. If at least 1 of the target 4 new registered child development homes from Strategy 1 of this goal, the rest would be 8 additional spaces within Guttenberg. If the original 16 spaces are retained and 8 new spaces are created, there will be a total of 24 spaces within registered child development homes by 2029.

Strategy 4- Explore options to expand Kids Kampus Community Child Care in Guttenberg.

Through the parent survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis*, it was determined that 61% of current parents and 56% of future parents prefer to use a licensed child care center, full-time, and year-round. As of November 2023, when the market analysis was completed, there were 83 regulated spaces in Guttenberg, 47 of those spaces are at Kids Kampus, while the remaining are within Head Start (20 spaces) and a registered child development home (16 spaces).

There are 110 children ages 0 to 11 in the city limits of Guttenberg, and it is estimated that 87 of those are from families that are likely to use regulated child care. In addition, there are families outside the city limits and in neighboring communities that desire child care located in

Guttenberg, increasing the number of children likely to be served by the child care programs located in the community.

Kids Kampus Community Child Care is a non-profit child care program governed by a Board of Directors which in turn employs a Center Director to oversee day-to-day operations. Kids Kampus is located at 210 Main Street in a one-story commercial building owned by Kids Kampus that sits on land owned by Guttenberg Municipal Hospital & Clinics (GMHC) that is being leased to Kids Kampus. According to the most recent HHS licensing report, the center consists of 5 classrooms and is licensed for 47 (10 infants, 12 two-year-olds, 10 preschoolers, and 15 school agers), however there are times when certain classrooms cannot be fully utilized, creating a difference in the license capacity and the number of children that can actually receive care at one time.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Kids Kampus Board of Directors will look at options to remodel the current facility and to relocate the center to allow an increase in the licensed capacity. The Board will look at both vacant lots to build new and existing buildings, which might include co-locating or using a portion of a building that is already occupied by another entity.
- Once a location is identified, the Kids Kampus Board of Directors will develop a business plan. The business plan will include a project description and project budget including construction or remodel of the facility, moving the existing equipment and furnishings, and on-going operations after the relocation. Some of the key components will be a project budget showing both costs and potential funding sources for construction or remodeling, purchasing equipment and furnishings for the new location, moving existing equipment and furnishings that will continue to be used, and hiring and training new staff.
- The Kids Kampus Board of Directors will use the business plan to facilitate conversations with potential partners for assistance applying for grants, which may include one of those the entities serving as the applicant on behalf of Kids Kampus if required for a pass-through grant.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2)

- The Kids Kampus Board of Directors will update the business plan developed in Year 1. The project projections from the business plan will be used to develop a capital campaign. Key components of the capital campaign will include start-up costs including the facility and furnishings, donor or sponsor levels and naming opportunities or recognition, potential grant sources, potential donors including individuals, organizations, and businesses, and plans for major fundraising events.

- Once the capital campaign is complete, it will be used to develop a proposal seeking partnerships for future operations. The proposal will be developed to show the benefits that would be experienced by both Kids Kampus and the potential partner.

July 2026 through June 2027 (Year 3)

- The capital campaign continues, while construction or remodeling is underway.

July 2027 through June 2028 (Year 4)

- The capital campaign continues, while construction or remodeling is underway.
- Inspections are complete and approval to open is received.

July 2028 through June 2029 (Year 5)

- The capital campaign continues until all multi-year pledges are received.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

Kids Kampus is located in a building that was not originally designed for child care, which does limit the use of some classrooms. While the center is licensed for 47 children, there are times fewer children are served due to facility limitations. By either remodeling the existing facility or relocating Kids Kampus would increase their licensed capacity to at least 60 spaces.

GOAL 2

Increase the current and future child care labor pool of Clayton County through training and partnerships.

According to the *Child Care Market Analysis* the factor that ranked highest when current parents were asked to select the factors they consider when selecting child care, “positive interactions between staff and children” was the single most important factor. Yet, a common challenge facing many child care programs today is finding and retaining well qualified child care staff.

Strategy 1- Explore establishing a Clayton County Child Care Wage Enhancement Program.

Of the 8 child care centers that participated in the child care needs survey that was completed as part of the recent *Child Care Market Analysis*, 7 had tried to hire staff in the last year. Among those that tried to hire 50% indicated they had experienced some level of difficulty (25% somewhat difficult and 25% very difficult). In addition, 37% of the centers indicated they had limited enrollment or closed a classroom due to not having enough staff during the last 12 months.

A child care wage enhancement program, similar to the one already established in neighboring Allamakee County, will be explored for Clayton County. The intention of the program would be to provide funding that can be used to increase the hourly wages paid to child care staff, rather than child care programs having to significantly increase tuition rates to cover those expenses. The ability for child care programs to pay higher wages will lead to improved child care workforce recruitment and retention.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- A member of the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will contact the Iowa Women’s Foundation and Upper Explorerland to schedule a county-wide informational meeting about setting up a local child care wage enhancement program.
- A member of the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will contact Upper Explorerland Regional Planning to discuss having the entity serve as the fiscal agent for the child care wage enhancement program.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will work with Iowa Women’s Foundation and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning to determine the amount of funds that need to be secured to begin making awards and sustain the pool from interest income. Once the amount has been determined, the Steering Committee will develop a

fundraising plan. The plan will include the fundraising goal, identifying potential donors or investors, timeline for raising funds, and plans for developing a campaign message to raise public awareness of why the fund is needed.

July 2026 through June 2027 (Year 3)

- Fundraising campaign begins and continues according to the fundraising plan.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will appoint a subcommittee to work with Iowa Women’s Foundation and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning to determine eligibility requirements, and establish the application and award process.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

At the end of year 3, the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will have developed the Clayton County Child Care Wage Enhancement Program, including program guidelines and a fundraising plan. At that point, this strategy will be completed, and the steering committee will begin following the steps in the fundraising planning.

Strategy 2- Explore options for offering the required training and work experience needed for child care staff and high school students to obtain a Child Development Associate® (CDA) Credential™.

According to the *Child Care Market Analysis* that was completed for Clayton County, the most important factor for parents when selecting child care was “positive interactions between staff and children”. Yet, a common challenge facing many child care providers today is finding and retaining well qualified child care staff.

The Council for Professional Recognition’s Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ is a professional development opportunity for early educators working with children ages birth to 5 years old to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in the early childhood education field. The CDA credentialing program assesses candidates using multiple source evidence, including an exam, observation and professional portfolio with resources and competency statements prepared by the candidate. To be eligible to apply for the credential, candidates must be at least a junior in high school, complete 120 clock hours of training, 480 hours of professional work experience (paid or volunteer, within the 3 years prior to application), and prepare a professional portfolio (within the 6 months prior to application).

Child care center staff and home providers that have a CDA Credential are eligible for Child Care WAGE\$® IOWA (assuming both the individual and the child care program meet eligibility requirements). WAGE\$ is a program offered by Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children (Iowa AEYC) that offers salary stipends to the early care and education workforce,

based on the individual's level of formal education and commitment to their program. Access to these stipends may help child care programs with staff recruitment and retention.

Child care programs that participate in Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K) quality rating improvement system have the potential to earn more points when being assessed for their rating if they have staff that have a CDA credential. IQ4K is a voluntary rating system for Licensed Child Care Centers, Preschools, Registered Child Development Homes, and Head Start programs. Participating providers achieve a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 by meeting key indicators of quality in the areas of: nutrition and physical activity, professional development, leadership and administration, family and community partnerships, environment, teaching staff qualifications, and teaching and learning.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Child Care Steering Committee will establish a subcommittee to promote the benefits of earning a CDA credential. The subcommittee will identify methods to inform child care program owners and operators including center directors and members of the boards of nonprofit child care centers, current child care staff, and high school students that may be interested in making early care and education a career path.
 - The main message for the campaign will focus on the benefits for both the child care staff that earn a CDA and the program where those individuals work, including funding through T.E.A.C.H. for the candidates assessment, wage stipends through Iowa WAGE\$, and the bi-annual achievement bonus for child care programs that participate in IQ4K.
 - The subcommittee will contact Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children (Iowa AEYC) for information to be used for this campaign.
<https://iowaaeyc.org/programs/cda-credential>
- The subcommittee will provide information about the CDA credential to counselors at local high schools, including the contact information for local child care centers that are willing to provide job opportunities for high school students to complete their work experience hours.
- The subcommittee will coordinate an informational meeting to host the CDA® Navigator. The meeting will be an opportunity for interested child care staff, high school students, and previously identified potential child care providers to learn about the CDA credential. The CDA Navigators employed by Iowa AEYC work side-by-side with CDA Candidates to support and facilitate the CDA process. They also build partnerships with community colleges and other training entities that provide education and training for the early childhood workforce.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- The subcommittee will review the efforts from the prior year to determine if the process needs to be repeated annually, biennially, or another frequency.
- The subcommittee will reach out to child care programs across the county to learn how many staff are working toward a CDA (including high school students that are working within local child care programs). During these contacts, child care programs will be asked about progress made with the hopes that the subcommittee can develop a success story to be shared.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

The expected outcome is an increase in the number of individuals with a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™, which will have a positive impact on the retention of child care staff and the quality of care in Clayton County. Individuals with a CDA are eligible to receive the WAGE\$ stipend. Individuals receiving WAGE\$ can earn between \$525 and \$9,200 annually (in addition to their regular pay), depending on the education they have completed and the child care program's participation in the Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K) quality rating improvement system.

Another expected outcome is increased participation in IQ4K, both by programs already participating that wish to increase their level, as well as child care programs participating for the first time. IQ4K provides five levels of quality (building blocks) that programs can achieve and continue to improve on. The rating level awarded to a child care program participating in IQ4K can be an indicator to help parents select quality child care. In addition, participating child care programs have access to programs and financial incentives not available to non-participating programs. A child care program participating in IQ4K receives an achievement bonus every two years, which is based on whether they are a home or center, their overall capacity, and the IQ4K level the program has achieved (1-5). Bonuses range from \$800 to \$4,000 for registered child development homes, and from \$800 to \$16,000 for licensed centers. Teaching staff (centers) or provider (homes) qualifications are one area that is scored when determining a program's IQ4K level. The number of staff with a CDA (or higher) is specifically taken into consideration for this score.

Strategy 3- Develop a child care staff pipeline by offering part-time employment, work-study opportunities, and internships for high school and college students.

Under current Iowa child care licensing standards, to be counted in ratio an individual must be at least 16 years old, as long as a staff member who is 18 or older is present, with the exception of school age children, which a 16-year-old can care for without another adult present in the room.

During their first three months of employment, all staff must complete training for mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control training, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid. In addition, during the first year of employment all staff must complete 10 contact hours of training from one or more of the following topical areas: child development, guidance and discipline, developmentally appropriate practices, nutrition, health and safety, communication skills, professionalism, business practices, and cross-cultural competence.

Work-study programs and internships provide hands-on experience and career exploration by allowing high school and college students an opportunity to go into the community and work at a local child care center. Students are provided with basic child development knowledge that can be implemented in child care programs and used to further their interest in pursuing a career in the industry.

Action Plan

July 2023 through June 2024 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will appoint a subcommittee to contact local high schools to determine if work-study programming is already offered. If they are, the subcommittee will inform local child care centers which schools are offering work-study programs, allowing the child care centers to establish a partnership with the schools they choose.
- The subcommittee will contact colleges in the area to learn how to partner to provide opportunities for students seeking an internship within the early childhood education field.
- Child care center directors will contact local high schools to partner with those that offer child development classes. Centers will invite the child development classes to visit their center to observe classroom staff and learn about career options as early childhood educators and early childhood program administrators.
- The subcommittee will participate in career events at the local high schools to inform students of the careers in Early Childhood Education, including opportunities for part-time jobs and work-study options at local child care programs. The subcommittee will include child care center directors in these events to allow the program to make direct connections with the high school students.
- The subcommittee will encourage child care center directors to volunteer with their local high school for other career events including mock interviews where students may express an interest in part-time employment while still in high school.

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- Child care centers, schools, and other partners will continue promoting work-study and internship opportunities, and career exploration events to connect with high school and college students.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

This strategy will benefit both child care centers and high school and college students. The immediate impact is the potential for child care centers to have an increased staffing pool by connecting with high school and college students.

Long term, the impact will be more individuals entering the early childhood education field, and possibly establishing their own child care program. Work-study programs for high school students and internships for college students may increase the number of individuals that pursue a career as either an Early Childhood Educator (typically classroom staff) or an Early Childhood Program Administrator (center director).

GOAL 3

Increase awareness of the need for regulated child care in Clayton County by engaging local employers and other community partners in child care solutions.

Child care is an essential component of the community's infrastructure that keeps businesses growing and keeps parents working. In Clayton County, 80% of families with children ages 0 to 5 and 79% of families with children ages 6 to 17 have all parents in the workforce. Involving local employers will result in solutions that meet the needs of families, while helping employers recruit and retain the workforce they need.

Strategy 1: Establish the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to implement this strategic plan.

A steering committee consisting of community and business leaders will be formed. The purpose of the committee is to lead efforts to implement this strategic plan. The steering committee will consist of 10 to 15 individuals. To keep a county-wide focus, an effort will be made to have representatives from as many communities as possible. Steering committee members will represent local employers, educational institutions, and community organizations, to assure diverse backgrounds and leadership skills.

The steering committee will create subcommittees to distribute the activities outlined in this plan. The size and composition of each subcommittee will be determined by the steering committee based on the expected activities to be completed.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee is formed.
- The committee will meet to develop committee procedures to guide operations. These procedures will include, but will not be limited to, term lengths and limits for committee members, removing or adding new committee members, frequency of committee meetings, how decisions will be made, and how subcommittees will be formed and operate. During this meeting, the steering committee will determine which activities are to be completed in Year 1 and develop a workplan outlining the specific activities and timelines. Individuals will be identified to serve on subcommittees as needed.
- The committee will contact the individuals identified and form the subcommittees. Each subcommittee will be given a copy of the workplan to guide their activities. Each subcommittee will report back to the steering committee at least quarterly, and that report will be shared at the next steering committee meeting.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- At the first meeting after the start of the second year of this plan, the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will review the activities from the strategic plan that were completed in Year 1. The committee will then determine which activities will occur in Year 2 and develop a workplan including specific actions and a timeline, then determine which subcommittee will lead the efforts and provide the subcommittee with workplan to follow.
- Each subcommittee will be given a copy of the workplan to guide their activities. Each subcommittee will report back to the steering committee at least quarterly, and that report will be shared at the next steering committee meeting.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

A steering committee consisting of community and business leaders will implement this strategic plan, while using their skills and expertise to bring additional resources to the county's child care efforts. Incremental outcomes will be the committee establishing subcommittees and assuring the action plan for each year is accomplished, or if needed, revised to a more suitable timeframe or action steps. The ultimate impact of the steering committee will be the achieving the goals of this strategic plan by 2029.

Strategy 2- Inform employers and other community partners about recent child care efforts including the *Child Care Market Analysis* and this *Strategic Plan for Child Care*.

Informing employers and other community partners of the child care needs identified through the market analysis, and the goals and strategies developed through strategic planning will strengthen the efforts of the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- Clayton County Foundation for the Future and the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will host a meeting where First Children's Finance will present the *Child Care Market Analysis* and the *Strategic Plan for Child Care*. This presentation will include the child care gap analysis, key findings of the child care market analysis, and the goals and strategies from the strategic plan.
- The Clayton County Foundation for the Future will post the *Child Care Market Analysis* and *Strategic Plan for Child Care* on their website. In addition, the final documents will be shared with each city and community organizations across the county with the request they post or share the plans.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will provide an annual update on the implementation of the strategic plan to employers and other community partners.
- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will highlight success stories related to the efforts of the strategic plan, including new child care providers, child care business expansions, and partnerships between child care programs and local employers.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

Engaging employers and other community partners in the child care conversation will result in increased support for the local workforce as well as child care programs. Informing employers and community partners of the *Child Care Market Analysis* and the *Strategic Plan for Child Care* may result in additional support and future engagement in this plan. As updates are shared and progress is demonstrated, it may lead to additional employer and community investments in child care.

Strategy 3- Provide resources and information about child care related benefits, child care partnerships, and employer sponsored child care models to local employers.

There are a variety of ways employers can support their workers who use child care. Through the parent survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis*, 41% of parents indicated neither their nor their spouse's or partner's employer offered child care related benefits, such as Dependent Care Flex Spending Accounts, tuition assistance, work from home options, or child care information in the employee handbook.

Through the employer survey conducted as part of the *Child Care Market Analysis*, very few employers indicated they are willing to participate in child care solutions, however it is likely the willingness may increase with more information and specific opportunities. Among the options employers were asked to consider, the top options were, to appoint an employee to serve on the Board of Directors of a child care program (33% of employers), make a donation or financial contribution for operating a child care program (20% of employers), and make a donation or financial contribution to build, remodel, or expand a child care center (13% of employers).

Action Plan

January through December 2024 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will lead efforts, although additional partners may be invited to assist, to provide resources and information to employers about how child care and child care related benefits can be a workforce recruitment and retention strategy, along with the types of benefits and options for the level of involvement an employer may choose. Information will be shared through a variety of

methods including newsletter articles and presentations. Some examples and topics that could be included are:

- Provide child care information to employees.
 - Employers include child care information in orientation materials and employee handbooks. Information could include contact information for Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) to utilize the parent referral service, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to apply for Child Care Assistance to help pay for tuition, and the local Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) area to apply for preschool tuition scholarships.
 - Child Care Resource & Referral, parent referral service to find child care: <https://iowaccrr.org/families>
 - Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, information for families: <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/child-care/child-care-tools-and-resources>
 - HAWC Partnerships for Children of Northeast Iowa, to inquire about preschool scholarships: <https://hhs.iowa.gov/locations/hawc-partnerships-children>
- Provide financial and non-financial support to employees that need child care.
 - Options for employers to directly supplement child care costs for their employees, including paying all or a portion of tuition directly to the child care provider, or reimbursing an employee for child care expenses.
 - Employer-funded scholarships for their own employees through either the employer, a specific child care provider, or a local fiscal agent.
 - Employer partnerships with child care programs for reserved spaces, enrollment priority, or tuition discounts for their employees, in exchange for on-going financial support.
 - Dependent Care Flex Spending Accounts (FSA), allowing employees to set aside their own pre-tax dollars to help pay for child care.
 - Lifestyle Spending Accounts, where the employee can use the funds for work-life balance benefits including child care tuition. These spending accounts are funded by the employer; however, employees may have to pay income tax on the funds.
 - Allowing schedule flexibility or work from home options (for appropriate positions), when an employee's child care arrangement is temporarily not available, such as when a child cannot attend due to sickness, or the provider being closed for a day.
- Provide financial support directly or indirectly, for a child care program.

- Make a financial contribution to a county-wide child care worker wage enhancement fund.
- A significant annual financial commitment to a child care program, such as donating an amount equal to a child care center director's annual wage.

January through December 2025 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will continue offering child care related information to employers and new businesses on a periodic basis to keep them up to date.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

Providing information and resources to employers can increase their involvement in child care, including offering child care related benefits that result in increased support for the local workforce. If employers incorporate child care benefits or child care information into materials such as handbooks or orientation information, employees that are parents will feel supported and may feel that child care is more accessible. Employers that are able to offer benefits that have a financial aspect such as flex spending or tuition scholarships may also experience positive outcomes such as improved employee attraction and retention.

Strategy 4- Develop and implement a campaign to increase community awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care.

In Iowa there are several forms of early care and education available to meet each family's varying needs and preferences. Some forms are regulated while others are not, and some regulated providers choose to go above the regulations to participate in voluntary quality rating programs or to become accredited. Quality child care contributes to a higher quality of life for all residents as it assures that children are experiencing the kind of care that not only is safe and nurturing but is preparing them for success and growing into health contributing citizens.

The delivery of quality child care is a business challenge for child care providers. It means a commitment to going above and beyond the minimum regulations such as low classroom staff to child ratios, age-appropriate curriculum, staff training and improved qualifications, physical environment improvements, and more. Providing quality care often results in increased operating costs.

Action Plan

January through December 2024 (Year 1)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will appoint a subcommittee to lead efforts to increase community awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care.
- The subcommittee will develop a workplan that identifies key audiences, the type of information needed for each audience, methods for reaching each audience, and a timeline. Some of the information that may be informative and messages that are a priority of the steering committee are:
 - The key findings from the *Child Care Market Analysis*, including the child care gap.
 - The goals and strategies to address child care from the *Strategic Plan for Child Care*.
 - When registration is required for home-based providers.
 - Difference between types of child care settings including regulated (registered homes and licensed centers) and non-regulated.
 - Voluntary quality initiatives compared to minimum requirements of being regulated.
 - Career options within early childhood education including being an early childhood educator (typically classroom staff) or an early childhood program administrator (center director).
 - Encouraging community support and recognition of local child care providers in conjunction with nationally established events.
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) Week of the Young Child each April <https://www.naeyc.org/events/woyc>.
 - Child Care Aware of America’s Child Care Provider Appreciation Day each May <https://providerappreciation.org>.
- The subcommittee will encourage child care programs to implement their own efforts to increase awareness. Some of the efforts child care programs will be encouraged to include are:
 - Press release announcements when staff complete training or professional development.
 - Hold an open house to allow the community to visit child care centers to better understand how they operate.
 - Contact their local chamber or commerce and county-wide economic development organizations to post open jobs.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeat annually)

- The subcommittee will launch the awareness campaign. At the end of the year all information that was shared will be reviewed to assure it is up to date and links or contact information remain correct.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

The expected outcome of this strategy is an increased awareness throughout the county of the difference between regulated and unregulated child care, some of the requirements regulated programs must meet, and an understanding of the business challenges some programs experience when delivering quality child care. As awareness increases care providers and staff will be recognized and appreciated as early childhood educators that lay the foundation for lifelong learning, and the value of the care will be recognized. Over time support for regulated child care programs will lead to opportunities to form partnerships with local businesses or other community partners, that in turn will help the child care programs remain sustainable.

Strategy 5- Provide parents access to information that will assist them in understanding, identifying, and choosing child care.

Every parent wants their child to be in a child care setting that not only meets their basic needs for safety and security, but also provides nurturance and prepares that child for school success. For working parents, choosing child care may be one of the most critical decisions they can make as the child care environment has lasting effects on the child.

Child Care Resource & Referral provides services and information to help parents make informed choices about the care of their child. In addition to providing parents referrals or names or specific child care providers, the agency also has information about choosing quality child care, a checklist of questions for interviewing child care providers, and information about child care regulations and voluntary quality initiatives in Iowa.

For families that struggle to pay for child care or preschool there are options available. Child Care Assistance is available to the children of income-eligible parents to help pay for care at Iowa Department of Health and Human Services approved child care programs while a parent or caretaker works or attends school. An additional source for families that wish to participate in preschool is the scholarship or voucher program available through Early Childhood Iowa.

Action Plan

July 2024 through June 2025 (Year 1)

- Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will lead efforts to increase awareness of the parent referral service available through Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R). The

steering committee will share the contact information for the regional CCR&R office, website link, and a QR code with:

- Community entities including (but not limited to): cities, churches, employers, banks, hospitals, clinics, libraries, school districts, realtors.
- Current parents and expecting parents.
- Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will compile information for communities, especially expecting parents, about the realities of getting into child care and waitlists. Information will be shared via social media, at the courthouse (marriage licenses), doctor's offices, and with local employers.
- Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will lead efforts to increase awareness about the Iowa Child Care Assistance (CCA) program through the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and encourage parents to complete the application on the HHS website in order for HHS to determine if they are eligible.
- Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will lead efforts to increase awareness about the Early Childhood Iowa preschool scholarship program and encourage parents to contact HAWC Partnerships for Children of Northeast Iowa for more information.

July 2025 through June 2026 (Year 2, repeated annually)

- The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee will review the information that was shared in Year 1 to determine if updates are needed. Updated information will be added and adjustments to the process made as determined necessary through the annual review.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts

Current and future parents will have easy access to information and resources that support their individual child care needs. Parents will become familiar with CCR&R child care referral assistance and gain knowledge to help them understand the different types of care and know what to look for in a quality environment.

PUTTING THIS PLAN INTO USE

This *Strategic Plan for Child Care* represents a significant investment of community resources. To achieve the expected outcomes and impacts outlined in this plan, members of the child care steering committee will need to remain engaged and lead efforts, which may include forming subcommittees or task forces so that additional community members or organizations become engaged, and activities and workload are distributed.

The plan and progress will be reviewed annually by the steering committee, along with strategies and action plans for the upcoming year reported to the community. A matrix with a summary of the planned activities for each of the five years is provided in the Appendix to assist with assigning and tracking which activities are complete.

APPENDIX

Strategic Planning Activities Summarized by Date

The following pages summarize the activities of each strategy in the “Child Care Goals and Strategies” section of this plan. This alternative format is intended to help the child care committee have a condensed list of the activities to be completed each year. This matrix can be convenient for reviewing activities to determine what has been accomplished, as well as to assign activities for the upcoming year. The activities listed in the following tables are a summary, the full details of each activity can be referenced in the description of the corresponding goal and strategies in this plan.

Year 1		
July 2024 through June 2025		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Communities form their own child care committees. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Compile information about becoming a registered home provider. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Implement a campaign to increase awareness about registered home providers and requirements. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Share information about being a registered home provider with the local child care committees and communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Contact CCR&R to discuss options for “Child Care Ready”. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Compile a list of currently operating non-registered child care providers. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
Connect individuals interested in becoming a registered home provider with CCR&R. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
The Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana child care committee contacts individuals identified through Strategy 1 and encourages them to connect with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R). (Goal 1, Strategy 2)		
The Guttenberg child care committee contacts individuals identified through Strategy 1 and encourages them to connect with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R). (Goal 1, Strategy 3)		
The Kids Kampus Board of Directors looks at options to remodel the current facility or to relocate to increase capacity. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
The Kids Kampus Board of Directors develops a business plan for a larger facility. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		

Year 1 Continued		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
The Kids Kampus Board of Directors will seek partners as needed for assistance applying for grants. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Schedule a county-wide informational meeting about establishing a child care wage enhancement program. (Goal 2, Strategy 1)		
Identify a fiscal agent for the child care wage enhancement program. (Goal 2, Strategy 1)		
Develop and implement a plan to promote the benefits of earning a CDA credential. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Information about the CDA credential provided to counselors at local high schools. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Informational meeting about the CDA credential. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Contact local high schools to determine if work-study programming is already offered. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Contact colleges in the area to learn about internship within the early childhood education field. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Child care centers directors contact local high schools to partner with those that offer child development classes. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Participate in career events at the high schools to inform students of the careers in Early Childhood Education. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Child care center directors to volunteer with high schools for other career events as they are scheduled. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
The Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee is formed. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
The Steering Committee develops committee procedures, a workplan, and identify subcommittees. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Subcommittees are formed and begin implementation of goals. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Host a meeting to present the <i>Child Care Market Analysis</i> and the <i>Strategic Plan for Child Care</i> . (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Clayton County Foundation for the Future posts the <i>Child Care Market Analysis</i> and <i>Strategic Plan for Child Care</i> on their website. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Provide employers with information about child care and child care related benefits. (Goal 3, Strategy 3)		
Appoint a subcommittee to increase community awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		

Year 1 Continued		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Develop a plan to increase community awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		
Child care programs are encouraged to implement their own efforts to increase awareness of, and appreciation for, regulated child care. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		
Implement efforts to increase the awareness about the parent referral service available through Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R). (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		
Compile information for communities, especially expecting parents, about the realities of getting into child care and waitlists. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		
Increase awareness about the Iowa Child Care Assistance (CCA) program and encourage parents to complete the application on the HHS website. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		
Increase awareness about the Early Childhood Iowa preschool scholarship program and encourage parents to contact HAWC Partnerships for Children of Northeast Iowa for more information. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		

Year 2		
July 2025 through June 2026		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Review and update the list of non-registered child care providers and repeat the process of encouraging them to become registered. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
The Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 2)		
The Guttenberg child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 3)		
The Kids Kampus Board of Directors will update the business plan and develop a capital campaign. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
The Kids Kampus Board of Director will use the capital campaign establish partnerships for future operations. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Develop and implement a fundraising plan for a wage enhancement program. (Goal 2, Strategy 1)		
Review CDA promotion efforts to determine frequency the process needs repeated. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Contact child care programs to learn about CDA efforts. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Develop CDA success stories as shared by child care programs. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Child care centers, schools, and other partners continue promoting work-study and internship opportunities, and career exploration events to connect with high school and college students. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Review the activities from the prior year and develop a workplan for the upcoming year. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Subcommittees are given the updated workplan to implement. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Provide an annual update on the implementation of this strategic plan to employers and other community partners. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Highlight success stories related to the efforts of this strategic plan. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Continue providing employers with information about child care and child care related benefits. (Goal 3, Strategy 3)		
Launch community awareness campaign and perform a year-end review to assure information stays up to date. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		

Review the information shared in Year 1 of the parent awareness campaign and update as needed. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		
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Year 3		
July 2026 through June 2027		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Review and update the list of non-registered child care providers and repeat the process of encouraging them to become registered. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
The Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 2)		
The Guttenberg child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 3)		
Kids Kampus' capital campaign continues; construction or remodeling is underway. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Fundraising campaign begins for the wage enhancement program. (Goal 2, Strategy 1)		
Establish the application and award process for the wage enhancement program. (Goal 2, Strategy 1)		
Contact child care programs to learn about CDA efforts. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Develop CDA success stories as shared by child care programs. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Child care centers, schools, and other partners continue promoting work-study and internship opportunities, and career exploration events to connect with high school and college students. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Review the activities from the prior year and develop a workplan for the upcoming year. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Subcommittees are given the updated workplan to implement. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Provide an annual update on the implementation of this strategic plan to employers and other community partners. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Highlight success stories related to the efforts of this strategic plan. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Continue providing employers with information about child care and child care related benefits. (Goal 3, Strategy 3)		
Continue community awareness campaign and perform a year-end review to assure information stays up to date. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		
Review the information shared through the parent awareness campaign and update as needed. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		

Year 4		
July 2027 through June 2028		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Review and update the list of non-registered child care providers and repeat the process of encouraging them to become registered. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
The Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 2)		
The Guttenberg child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 3)		
The Kids Kampus' capital campaign continues, while construction or remodeling is underway. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Inspections are complete and Kids Kampus receives approval to open. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Contact child care programs to learn about CDA efforts. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Develop CDA success stories as shared by child care programs. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Child care centers, schools, and other partners continue promoting work-study and internship opportunities, and career exploration events to connect with high school and college students. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Review the activities from the prior year and develop a workplan for the upcoming year. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Subcommittees are given the updated workplan to implement. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Provide an annual update on the implementation of this strategic plan to employers and other community partners. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Highlight success stories related to the efforts of this strategic plan. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Continue providing employers with information about child care and child care related benefits. (Goal 3, Strategy 3)		
Continue community awareness campaign and perform a year-end review to assure information stays up to date. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		
Review the information shared through the parent awareness campaign and update as needed. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		

Year 5		
July 2028 through June 2029		
Activity	Responsible Party	Date Completed
Review and update the list of non-registered child care providers and repeat the process of encouraging them to become registered. (Goal 1, Strategy 1)		
The Monona, Farmersburg, and Luana child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 2)		
The Guttenberg child care committee will continue to partner with the Clayton County Child Care Steering Committee to increase the number of regulated child care spaces in their communities. (Goal 1, Strategy 3)		
Kids Kampus' capital campaign continues until all multi-year pledges are received. (Goal 1, Strategy 4)		
Contact child care programs to learn about CDA efforts. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Develop CDA success stories as shared by child care programs. (Goal 2, Strategy 2)		
Child care centers, schools, and other partners continue promoting work-study and internship opportunities, and career exploration events to connect with high school and college students. (Goal 2, Strategy 3)		
Review the activities from the prior year and develop a workplan for the upcoming year. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Subcommittees are given the updated workplan to implement. (Goal 3, Strategy 1)		
Provide an annual update on the implementation of this strategic plan to employers and other community partners. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Highlight success stories related to the efforts of this strategic plan. (Goal 3, Strategy 2)		
Continue providing employers with information about child care and child care related benefits. (Goal 3, Strategy 3)		
Continue community awareness campaign and perform a year-end review to assure information stays up to date. (Goal 3, Strategy 4)		
Review the information shared through the parent awareness campaign and update as needed. (Goal 3, Strategy 5)		