Child Care in Your Community
Strategies to Build Capacity and Support

Created in partnership with
Child Care Aware® of North Dakota
and Vision West ND
with funding support from the Bush Foundation
Starting a Child Care in Your Community

Child Care Aware® of North Dakota and Vision West ND developed this guide to help you make informed decisions when starting child care in your community.

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Child Care In Your Community

Child care is an important component of community infrastructure, but it can be a challenge to successfully operate a child care facility in North Dakota.

The increase in demand for child care makes it difficult to meet the needs of young families arriving in the state. While the basics of child care were generally well served by child care providers prior to the energy industry expansion, even then there were challenges in meeting the specific needs of infant care, shift workers, families with multiple children, children who are ill, or when the public schools are closed. Populations in North Dakota communities are projected to show increases of up to 25% by 2025. Some western cities are projected to see population increases of 30% to 137%. A study conducted by Dr. Richard Rathge, then at NDSU, recommended North Dakota create child care space for 21,000 more children by 2025 or nearly 1600 spaces per year. This would mean an increase of nearly a thousand new family/group facilities.

Along with housing and infrastructure, the lack of child care availability consistently ranked as one of the top three topics brought forward at every one of Vision West ND’s 23 local planning meetings. When community leaders and volunteers were asked: “What is affecting the quality of life in your community?” A consistent top response was Child Care. The lack of child care services is a workforce issue, a social issue, a family issue, and a community issue, not only in western North Dakota, but throughout the entire state.

The intent of this publication is for use by community leaders and potential and existing child care providers in the energy-producing counties of western North Dakota. However, communities from throughout the state are encouraged to use and benefit from this resource.

We encourage community leaders and people exploring child care to contact Vision West ND and Child Care Aware ND to have questions answered and receive guidance regarding the various child care facility models showcased in this toolkit.
Strategies to Build Capacity and Support for Child Care

Child Care Aware can provide technical assistance in a variety of formats that best meets the needs of your community. Coaches are available to facilitate community meetings, assist in developing and conducting needs assessments, support the community in facility planning, program management, staff recruitment and training. Consultants assist interested individuals discern the operation of a child care business and offer support to newly licensed programs through a menu of topics that will help build a successful program.

www.ndchildcare.org
800-997-8515 (press 3)
Child Care Models

Child care programs fall into three main categories: family, group and center. Business models for ownership and management can vary based on the resources available within a community. Here are some models to consider for your community:

**Private/Public Ownership**
The child care is fully owned and operated by an individual, partners or an employer.

**Non-Profit Run by a Board of Directors**
The child care has a 501c3 non-profit status and is governed by a board of directors.

**Public School Partnership**
The school district owns the property, but the actual child care program is run by a private owner with potential access to school resources (food service, busing, gym space, specialists, etc.).

**Cooperative**
Non-profit employer-assisted parent cooperative that is owned and run jointly by its members who share in the benefits of child care.

**Hospital/Care Facility Partnership**
A health facility owned property that is run by a private owner with potential access to hospital or long-term care resources (food service, janitorial service and products, etc.).

**City Owned**
A political subdivision purchases/owns the building and property and gets a person to run it. The operator may run it as a private business or may be on the payroll of the city or county.
Successes and Challenges

No two child care programs are the same. However, many child care programs across North Dakota face similar challenges, are rewarded by successes, and learn from both. Here are some examples from a survey of providers:

**Keys to Success**

- Good training for staff
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum and programming for children
- Board members who are not afraid to get involved and help when needed
- Community support and engagement - get to know your community and invite the community to get to know your child care facility
- Staff and a director who are personable and professional
- Good communication with parents
- The ability to address the varied social, emotional, and physical needs of children

**Challenges We Face**

- Hiring and retaining staff - a program needs to be a good place to work at and work for
- Knowing you need to raise staff salaries, but don’t have the cash flow to do so
- Working with parents who may not understand child care
- Scheduling staff to meet ratio requirements and cover time-off/sick day needs of staff
- Staff meetings - they are necessary, but can be difficult
- Realizing that a child care program needs to work with both children AND adults
- Resolving the dilemma between hiring more staff or paying overtime
- Staying up-to-date on changes in state rules and regulations
- Having transportation options for children
- A board that sets policies without determining if it is appropriate for a child care facility
- The need to expand, but not having the space or money to do so

**What We Wish We’d Known**

Past experiences can be a great teacher. Here are some things that child care start up leaders wish they would have known when starting their project.

- You need to do your homework before starting a child care business
- Partnerships, both private and public, are very important
- It is important to know and understand all the state rules and regulations of child care
- Required staff training and director certification takes longer than you think it will
- Not all children are the same - some have special social, emotional and physical needs that you need to plan for and accommodate
- A child care business is very labor intensive
- Work ethic and compassion will vary among staff members. Communicating expectations and the values of your program needs to be part of staff training
- Being the director of a program is a big job
- Written policies and a transition plan are needed to accommodate staff/director changes
- Parents are challenging - staff needs training on how to care for children as well as how to best interact with parents.
- Having or not having child care options available impacts the community
- A child care business may not be as profitable as anticipated
Understanding Financing Options

Don’t let your good ideas for a child care facility go by the wayside because of inadequate initial funding. It is important to begin with enough money to cover startup costs and operational costs for 60-90 days, as it is unlikely the facility will have full enrollment when the doors open for business.

There are many sources of funding for child care businesses. There are sources for loans and grants through commercial banks, government agencies, private sources, corporations, and grant programs.

Grants

Match- a requirement for the said entity to raise $X before getting the grant. The basic principal here is that people who have something invested will care more. Additionally, it tests if the community will support it. There are two different kind of match- hard and soft. Hard match is any actual money that is donated/given to the agency to get to the number they are supposed to match. The other kind of match is soft. This is anything else that would be donated- things, services, and time. These things are harder to put a monetary value on, but they can be just as good. Soft match is often called in-kind match.

Lending

A primary loan is the first loan recorded on a piece of property or business. Secondary loans are any subsequent loan taken on the same property or business. If a foreclosure or bankruptcy should occur, the primary loan has the first claim on the sale proceeds of the property/business.

Primary- locally based, familiar with local market and can make decisions quickly. More flexible. Low closing costs because they do all the loan paperwork in-house.

Secondary- large businesses/banks. Strict guidelines. Features fixed rates and has down payment options. Have to have escrow account, private mortgage insurance, and there are closing costs.

Primary lenders keep loans as part of their portfolio and service them for the life of the loan. These are typically community or locally-owned banks/ institutions. Often require 10-20 percent down payment. Primary lenders can be large banks, but these banks typically sell the loan to secondary lenders.

Secondary lenders buy mortgages from larger regional and national banks. They can often apply through federal loan programs. Down payment requirements usually aren’t as high, but there are very strict insurance, escrow, and closing cost regulations.

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Volunteers and Board Members

People who volunteer their time and energy to a child care facility can make a difference in children’s lives. Facilities that rely on volunteers to assist with tasks such as playtime, administrative and clerical work, and maintenance tasks must take proactive measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the children under volunteer care.

Check with your licenser to review the rules and regulations if you plan to use volunteers in a licensed child care program.

Volunteer Liability

You can limit the liability of your organization and its volunteers if you follow these guidelines:

- Treat volunteers like you would treat paid staff by developing volunteer position descriptions, using and carefully screening volunteer applications, and training and closely supervising any volunteers.
- Promptly investigate and respond to any complaints or concerns regarding a volunteer’s actions.
- Secure insurance protection for your volunteers, as well as make sure some has been secured for any staff paid to conduct the program.

Guidelines for Board Members

Because state and federal laws give unpaid workers an uncertain level of protection, it is best to take precautions when you volunteer in your community.

- Avoid conflict of interest
- Educate yourself about how the organization operates.
- Examine internal controls to ensure staff people handle business in a consistent manner to minimize any opportunity to misappropriate funds.
- Examine the organization’s bylaws.
- Understand responsibilities. Organizations should provide job descriptions, orientation and education sessions for board members to ensure that they understand their responsibilities.
- Make sure the organization protects you with a liability insurance policy. Check the type of coverage and amount.
- Attend meetings and document votes and discussions. If you don’t attend meetings, you can be held just as responsible as those who do attend on a regular basis.
Attraction and Retention Strategies

The more people can incorporate things they enjoy into their work, the more likely they are to enjoy what they are doing.

Allowing employees to bring their passions to work, whether it be making art, playing music, or exercising, helps to retain and attract employees to any business. Providing employees with pleasant work spaces and flexible scheduling is proven to enhance the effectiveness of an employee. A simple thank you or note of appreciation has a big impact on employee happiness. Feeling heard is another part in any healthy workplace. Unhappy employees who see employers making efforts to maintain a healthy and happy work environment are more inclined to become a part of the solution instead of resigning their position.

Attraction Strategies

• Connect with local colleges/vocational schools
• Look for interns that could become employees
• Add a “hiring” or “careers” page to your website
• Attend career fairs
• Look to non-profits looking for positions for their clientele
• Post a hiring sign
• Host an open house
• Use social media
• Offer incentives if a parent makes a recommendation for employee or enrollment
• Allow candidates to spend real time with the people they would be working with
• Show the absolute perks of the job, but also its downsfalls, so they aren’t in for any surprises
• Have a simple application process
• Ask employees for referrals
• Have a good job description
• Show the potential employee how much you already value your other employees
• Make them feel like a part of the family
• Show off some of those fun activities you have been doing at work
• Sign on bonus

Retention Strategies

• Discounted child care for employees
• Local area discounts- network with local business owners to work out deals for employees
• Paid break and prep time with float person coverage
• Thank you notes- encourage the children and other employees to make thank-you notes for employees that are doing a good job
• Encourage input- things can always be improved, let their ideas be heard
• Send employees to state, regional or national conferences
• Celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, and other milestones
• Flexible scheduling
• Paid holidays off- early off the day before
• Conduct “stay” interviews- a time specifically meant to address any issues they are having, so that they can be corrected
• Have a “float” available to cover staff breaks
• Have a break area for staff. Have adult size furniture in addition to child size
• Random small gifts
• Keep the team “in the know”- rumors don’t start if everyone knows what’s going on
• Send out a short anonymous survey- for the people who may be too shy to give their opinions out loud
• Build a wall of fame
• Give employees an allowance to choose materials and equipment for their classroom
• Incentive bonus for the employee who consistently comes to work or goes above and beyond
Fundraising Ideas

Child care facilities are often underfunded and must make up the difference through fundraising efforts. Every facility has its own reasons to hold a fund raiser. Perhaps it needs new tables and chairs, playground equipment or educational toys.

Creative Fundraisers

- Create and sell a calendar featuring children’s artwork
- Amazon Smile donates a percentage of the price of the products you are purchasing to an organization of your choice
- Rubber Duck Race
- Grocery stores reward programs
- Scripts is a website where you can purchase gift cards and some of the funds go back to the organization
- Cow Pie Bingo
- Flamingo fundraiser
- Raffles (permit required)
- Holiday gift wrapping
- Bushels for Babies at the elevator where farmers designated proceeds of a set number of bushels of grain as a financial donation
- Add a Facebook “donate now” link on your facility website
- Giving tree for items needed for classrooms,
- Host a talent show and charge an entry fee
- Partner with restaurants and local businesses to earn part of the proceeds generated from a special event.
- A variety of products from pizzas, pastries, gift wrap, fruit and many other items can be sold to raise funds
Economic Development Contacts

Contact city, county, and regional economic development groups to inquire about financial assistance.

- Region 1
- Region 2
- Region 3
- Region 4
- Region 5
- Region 6
- Region 7
- Region 8

### Region 1

**Divide County Job Development Authority**
PO Box 297
Crosby ND 58730
701-956-6006
www.dividecountynd.org

**McKenzie County Development**
201 5th St NW
Watford City ND 58854
701-444-7419
www.4eyes.net/economic

**Tioga Community Development/ EDC**
PO Box 218
Tioga ND 58852
701-629-8875
www.tiogand.net

**Tri County Regional Planning Council**
113 4th Street East
Williston ND 58801
701-577-1358

**Watford City Development**
213 2nd St NE
Watford City ND 58854
701-570-3392
econdev.mckenziecounty.net

**Williston Economic Development Corporation**
113 4th St E
Williston ND 58802
701-577-8110
www.willistondevelopment.com

### Region 2

**Bottineau Economic Development Corporation**
519 Main Street
Bottineau ND 58318
701-228-3922
www.bottineaedc.com

**Kenmare Community Development Corporation**
PO Box 35
Kenmare ND 58746
701-385-4232
www.kenmarend.com

**Minot Area Development Corporation**
1020 20th Ave SW
Minot ND 58701
701-852-1075
www.minotusa.com

**Renville County Job Development Authority**
PO Box 68
Mohall ND 58761
701-756-6288
www.renvillecountynd.org

**Rugby Job Development Authority**
126 2nd Ave SW Ste 1
Rugby, ND 58368-0136
(701) 776-7655
www.rugbyjda.com

**Souris Basin Planning Council**
1905 2nd Street SE
Minot ND 58701
701-839-6641
www.sourisbasin.org
Region 3
Cavalier County Job Development Authority
901 3rd St., Ste. 5
Langdon, ND 58249-2457
(701) 256-3475
www.ccjda.org

FORWARD Devils Lake Development Corp
P.O. Box 1048
Devils Lake, ND 58301-0879
(701) 662-4933
devilslakend.com/pages/Programs-Incentives

North Central Planning Council
P.O. Box 603
Cando, ND 58324-0603
(701) 968-4340
www.townercountynd.com

North Central Planning Council
417 5th St NE
Devils Lake, ND 58301-2539
(701) 662-8131
www.northcentralplanningcouncil.com

Rolla Job Development Authority
P.O. Box 1200
Rolla, ND 58367-1200
(701) 477-9130
www.ndrolla.com/job-development-authority.html

Region 4
Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation
120 N 4th St
Grand Forks, ND 58203
(701) 746-2720
http://www.grandforks.org

City of McVille
P.O. Box 275
McVille, ND 58254-0275
(701) 322-4343
www.hannafordnd.com

Red River Regional Council
516 Cooper Ave Ste 101
Grafton, ND 58237-1533
(701) 352-3550
www.redriverrc.com

Walsh County Job Development Authority
600 Cooper Ave
Grafton, ND 58237-1509
(701) 352-3550
www.redriverrc.com

Region 5
Forman Community Development Corporation
P.O. Box 282
Forman, ND 58032
(701) 724-3216
www.formannd.com/community-development-corporation

Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corp.
Fargo, ND 58102
(701) 364-1900
www.gfmedc.com

Lake Agassiz Regional Council
417 Main Ave Suite 201
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 235-1197
www.lakeagassiz.com

Lisbon Economic Development
701-683-4140
www.lisbonnd.com/economic-development.html

City of Milnor
P.O. Box 70
Milnor, ND 58060-0070
(701) 427-5272
www.milnomnd.com

Steele County Job Development Authority
P.O. Box 451
Finley, ND 58230-0255
(701) 524-2645
www.finleynd.com

Traill County Economic Development Commission
P.O. Box 856
Hillsboro, ND 58045-0856
(701) 636-4746
www.tcedc.com

Wahpeton Economic Development
P.O. Box 490
Wahpeton, ND 58074-0490
(701) 642-8559
www.wahpeton.com

City of West Fargo
800 4th Ave E
West Fargo, ND 58078-2060
(701) 433-5300
www.acityonthegrow.com
Starting Child Care in Your Community

Region 6

Carrington Job Development Authority
P.O. Box 501
Carrington, ND 58421-0439
(701) 652-3919
www.carringtonnd.com

Cooperstown-Griggs County Economic Development
P.O. Box 553
Cooperstown, ND 58425
701-797-3613
www.cooperstownnd.com

Edgeley Job Development Authority
P.O. Box 205
Edgeley, ND 58433
(701) 493-2208
www.edgeley.com

City of Ellendale
P.O. Box 267
Ellendale, ND 58436-0267
(701) 349-3252
www.ellendalend.com

Jamestown/Stutsman County Jobs Development Corp
P.O. Box 293
Jamestown, ND 58402-0293
(701) 252-6861
www.growingjamestown.com

LaMoure Community Development
701-883-5910
www.lamourend.com/economic-development

Logan County Job Development Authority
P.O. Box 282
Napoleon, ND 58561
(701) 754-2000

New Rockford Area Community Betterment Corporation
P.O. Box 775
New Rockford, ND 58356-0775
(701) 947-2205
www.cityofnewrockford.com

Oakes Enhancement Inc.
P.O. Box 365
Oakes, ND 58474-0365
(701) 742-3508
www.oakesnd.com

South Central Dakota Regional Council
429 2nd St SW, Ste 208
P.O. Box 903
Jamestown, ND 58401-4260
(701) 952-8050
www.scmdrc.org

Region 7

Valley City/Barnes County Development Corp
P.O. Box 724
Valley City, ND 58072-0724
(701) 845-1891
www.valleycitynd.com

City of Ashley
P.O. Box 97
Ashley, ND 58413-0097
(701) 288-3096
www.ashley-nd.com

Beulah Job Development Authority
PO Box 468
Beulah ND 58523
701-748-2233
www.beulahnd.org/economic

Bismarck/Mandan Development Association
PO Box 2615
Bismarck ND 58502
701-584-2525
www.bmda.org

Elgin Community Betterment Inc.
PO Box 93 Elgin, ND 58533
701-584-2525
www.elginnorthdakota.com

Garrison Area Improvement Association
42 N Main
Garrison ND 58540
701-463-2631
www.garrisonnd.com

Hazen Community Development
PO Box 717
Hazen ND 58545
701-748-2550
www.hazennd.org

Hazelton Development Corp
PO Box 383
Hazelton, ND 58554
701-782-6878
www.hazeltonnorthdakota.com

Job Development Authority – McIntosh County
P.O. Box 315
Ashley ND 58413
(701) 288-5140
www.mcintoshnd.com/job_development_authority_80.html
Statewide Funding Options

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Community Development Loan Fund
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund
- Bank of North Dakota - PACE and FLEX PACE
- North Dakota Development Fund (NDDF)
- Child Care Loan Fund
- Small Business Association (SBA) Loan Program
- USDA Intermediary Relending Program
- USDA/Rural Development
Thank You

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- Energy Capital Cooperative Child Care - Hazen, ND
- Eventide Heartland Child Care Center - Devils Lake, ND
- Hope Early Learning Center Corporation - Hope, ND
- Kids Choice - Walhalla, ND
- Kids Next Door - Rugby, ND
- Little Hands Loving Hearts Child Development Center - Minot, ND
- Little Lyons Daycare - Linton, ND
- Meadowlark Daycare - Killdeer, ND
- St. Aloisius Pot of Gold Generations of Learning - Harvey, ND
- Sunnyside Childcare Center, LLC - Devils Lake, ND
- Tot Lot Child Daycare - Bowman, ND
- Wolf Pup Daycare - Watford City, ND
Project Partners

Child Care Aware® of North Dakota assists families in their search for and understanding of quality child care, builds the knowledge and skills of early childhood practitioners through professional learning services and coaching, supports communities in developing innovative strategies to expand the capacity of care to meet families’ needs and is the “go to” place for individuals who want to start a child care business.

Vision West ND is a consortium of representatives from the 19 energy-producing counties in western North Dakota. The project's mission is to lead, educate, and collaborate to mobilize western North Dakota toward a resilient and prosperous quality of life for all residents. Child care is one of the top priorities identified as essential for sustainability and a good quality of life.

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