

**Childcare Task Force of Ellis County Meeting Minutes – November 8, 2021**  
**Welcome Center – 2700 Vine Street**  
**Virtual Option: [Click here to join the meeting](#)**

1. Committee Member Introductions: Names highlighted in yellow were present.

Zach Woolf	FHSU Foundation	Parent
Tori Ruder	Ruders Rugrats Daycare	Daycare Provider
Jennifer Oborny	Hays Area Children’s Center	Infant/Toddler Early Intervention
Berny Unruh	Cottonwood Extension District	Family Community Wellness
Jennifer Burgardt	Childcare Aware of Kansas	Community-Wide Resource
Sarah Meitner	Heartland Community Foundation	Grant Resources
Sandy Jacobs	City of Hays	Mayor
Tasha Eichman	Nex-Tech Wireless	Parent
Barb Wasinger	State of Kansas	111th District Representative
Lisa Lane	Ameriprise Financial	Parent
Hali Bielser	Uhlig, LLC	Parent
Sarah Wasinger	The Chamber in Hays, Kansas	Community advancement
Bradford Wiles	Cottonwood Extension District	Early Childhood Development
Doug Williams	Grow Hays	Community advancement
Donna Hudson-Hamilton	Early Childhood Connections	Early Childhood Development
Shelly Scheck		
Kelly Horn	Sunshine Connections	Provider
Patrick McGinnis	Breathe Coffee House	Community advancement
Dacia Haselhorst	TreeTop Security	Possible provider link
Kaitlin Robben		Parent
Amy Staab	KDHE	
Jill Keller	KDHE	
Kayla Ford	Golden Belt Cooperative	
Corey Burton	USD 388	Superintendent

2. Ellis County Childcare Survey Question Review

a. Discuss questions and answers

Wiles will send out the questions for the committee to review.

- A question that will be added will speak to finding out if responders are licensed but not currently providing childcare.
- Another question that will be added will ask providers what their preferred capacity is.

b. Timeline for survey

The task force agreed to have the survey open as soon as possible and keep it open through December 31, 2021.

c. Distribution process – Wiles said the survey will have greater success if everyone can send it out through their personal and professional communication channels and recommended these additional channels:

- Official press release to all media outlets
- Share with all the local school districts
- Share with all childcare providers through their communication channels.
- Schedule a Forward Ever interview with Gary Shorman

Wasinger shared The Chamber would additionally communicate the survey through its communication channels, to include:

- KAYS radio interview
- December newsletter
- Monday news blast communications
- Facebook page – include boost for duration of the survey window
- Push downs through Hays Post paid for by The Chamber

### 3. Victoria Senior Center Facility Discussion

Jeff Pfeifer presented his project to the task force. He purchased the 42,000 sq. ft. assisted living facility in Victoria. He is interested in including childcare in the facility and is currently looking to find funds to pay for someone to assess the facility to identify the integrity of the structure.

### 4. Questions to Address as a County

- What are our specific needs for childcare in Ellis County?
- What should our process for improvement look like to address the needs?
- What would it take to establish additional daycares or a center?
- Who is not here today and needs to be to move forward and address the issue?

No discussion occurred with these questions.

### 5. Facebook Group – Childcare Task Force of Ellis County

Wasinger shared that Ruder started the Childcare Task Force of Ellis County Facebook page and invited all task force members to join the group and be a part of the discussion. Wasinger said she posted a question in the group to start getting feedback from childcare providers. Some providers have publicly responded, while others preferred to remain anonymous with their feedback. The ideas generated from that discussion will be tracked on future agendas to guide our efforts.

### 6. What challenges exist for current providers in addition to the ones listed below?

- Keeping a house a home and business simultaneously
- State regulations in Kansas are more stringent than in surrounding states

- Making a profit as a business model
- Classification of infants for available spots

Wasinger asked for committee members to share challenges they hear from providers so they can be added to the list.

7. Possible Incentives to Consider for Current and Future Providers
  - Offset the cost of liability insurance for providers
  - Utility/internet discounts
  - Food assistance/reimbursement
  - Equipment

The task force will continue to update ideas for incentives at future meetings.

8. Future Meeting Date/Time Suggestions –

- Future agenda items

December 8<sup>th</sup> will be the next meeting. It will be held at 6 p.m. at the Welcome Center at 2700 Vine St. to afford providers the opportunity to attend outside of their traditional work day.