

Communities in Action Workshop – Ellis County

Minutes from 3/10/2022

Attendees: Jennifer Brungardt, Mitch Rucker, Tanya Koehn, Brett Schmidt, David Clingan, Sandy Gottschalk, Sarah Meitner, Sarah Wasinger, Donna Hudson-Hamilton, Sandy Jacobs, and Doug Williams

Contact information for presenters is on page 31 of the booklet.

Economic Impact

Kansas Action for Children – mission is to make Kansas a place where all kids grow up healthy and thrive. Parents can't afford to pay more, and providers can't afford to make less.

We need regulations and standards for health and safety. 14% of the median household income per child in Ellis County is our current cost. In 2010 the Kansas legislature passed Lexi's Law, which put significant regulations into place. Since 2016, there have not been any deaths in child care in Kansas. We are experiencing market failure to stabilize the industry.

The first five years of life is when 80% of brain development occurs. The environment a person grows up in affects them their entire life. It's an issue of equity. Rural kids deserve the same opportunity to thrive as those in the city. Quality child care impacts behavioral issues in school, improves mental health, lowers incarceration rates, increases high school graduation rates, enhances degree attainment and earning potential as an adult.

kac.org will send out legislative updates every Friday when they are in session. Emails are sent out when key votes occur. SB-541 would tell all new providers wouldn't be allowed to deny entry for members of the public. Contact Rick Billinger about that bill.

Mitch Rutger
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Data

153,290 children under the age of 6 have all available parents working. Family child care home can have ten children with one provider. A group child home can have twelve children with two providers. There has been a 17% decrease in child care provider across the state since 2018. Quarterly, 80 – 85% of providers are contacted by Child Care Aware of Kansas.

We should establish appropriate partnerships, continue with task force efforts, evaluate our community's needs, make data informed decisions, and promote community awareness.

Partners from the Field

Child Care Licensing (CCL) – Amy Staab

Licensed in group day care homes – can have a maximum of ten kids with one provider. Can have 12 kids with two providers. Age does come into play. 25 square feet are required per child for play. The Fire Marshall inspects each location. Shane Preston is the local Fire Marshall in Hays. Some day cares

are in schools and churches. Fire Marshall approval is required at these locations before services begin. There have to be two exits that lead to the outside. Providers must be 18 year of age or older, have graduated high school, or received their GED. Have to complete a health assessment, be first aid certified, complete background checks, have outdoor play area on sight and fenced in for safety.

Capacity of centers vary. They are usually broken down by age (infant, preschool, etc.). Each child must have 35 square feet of space at a center. 24 or more children will require a coded foot print for the Fire Marshall. Infant and toddlers must have exits in their rooms. A full-time director (35 hours or more) must be on site. All lead staff must be 18 or older. Assistants must be 16 years or older. There must be one toilet for every 15 children. Children must be on the ground-level, not second floor or basement.

Ransom and Ness City hospital purchased a house and opened it up as a day care facility to open ten spots for hospital staff. Reach out to Edwards County to see how their home lease project worked. Addresses are licensed, not the individual. The liability would fall on the property owner.

Child Care Subsidy (DCF) – Pamela Beach / Jennifer Pishny

Families might qualify to receive assistance through DCF. Those funds may not always match the cost of charges for child care. Foster families would have to supplement that assistance to cover the cost of care. Parents pay with their EBT card or over the phone.

Maximum Monthly Income When You First Apply	
Family Size	Tier I – Initial Eligibility Determination
2	\$3,630
3	\$4,575
4	\$5,520
5	\$6,468
6	\$7,413
7	\$8,323*
8	\$8,508*
9	\$8,693*
10	\$8,878*

*This is the maximum allowable by federal CCDF regulations.

Michelle Beldin is the local contact for DCF assistance.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (KSDE) – Kelly Horn

Sunshine Connections sponsors homes in NW/NC Kansas. This is a federally funded program. They only do the day care homes. Providers must be licensed to qualify for the food program. Providers have to have a sponsor to sign off on the program. There is no cost for the provider to participate. Staff will come teach the providers what they will need to serve in order to be reimbursed. It takes about five minutes a day to fill out the paperwork to track the meals. Two meals and a snack or a meal and two snacks can be reimbursed for each child. Reimbursement can usually cover a majority of the food costs. Two to three classes are offered each year for anyone who wants to find out more information about the program. 25% or more of children have to qualify for free and reduced to participate in Sunshine

Connections. Center based providers have to send their paperwork directly to the state. Sunshine Connections could also work for Adult Day Care facilities.

The committee should look into how many providers don't qualify for food assistance to see if a larger initiative warrants discussion/consideration.

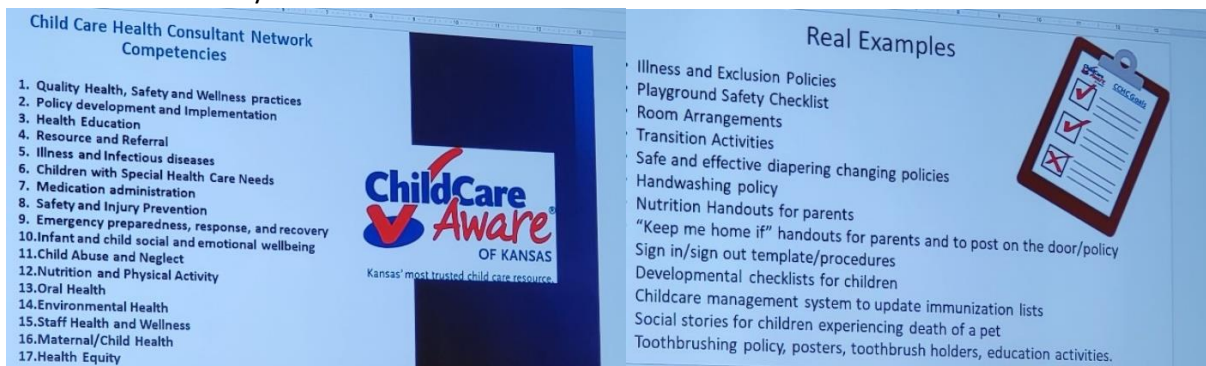
Community Session

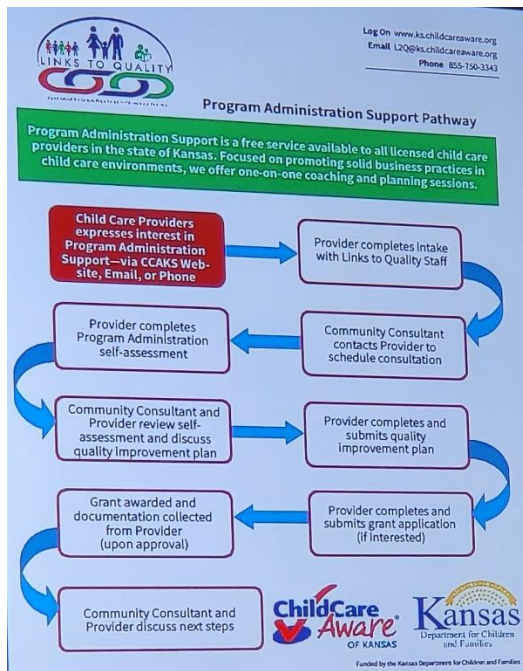
- Convert the academy to an adult day care facility
- Identify the various grants that we can apply for and what specific projects we should tackle.
- Focus on finding land and building/renovating facilities
- Workforce concern – how do we fill all of the spots we need?
 - High school students can get their Child Development Accreditation and have it transfer over to college credit. It takes 120 clock hours. (could we incentivize this?) Can they do these classes at school
- Volunteers would still have to go through all of the training and certification process, as well as pass a background check.
- Start a fund for child care through the Heartland Community Foundation.
- The retirement facility project north of HaysMed is about two years away from being completed.
- Mary Loftus Freeman and Judy Keller from KU have been given permission to write grants for our task force to address our child care needs.
- The Patterson Foundation is helping with child care initiatives for communities.
- Kansas Promise Scholarships – are given based on need but covers portion of cost for early childhood degrees.
- Have retired professionals help teach at the retirement center.
- Incentive package for incoming providers: cell phone discount, discount for gym memberships
- Look at hosting community-wide meetings to talk specifically about child care. We would wait to have that meeting until after the 489 Bond vote.

Provider Video

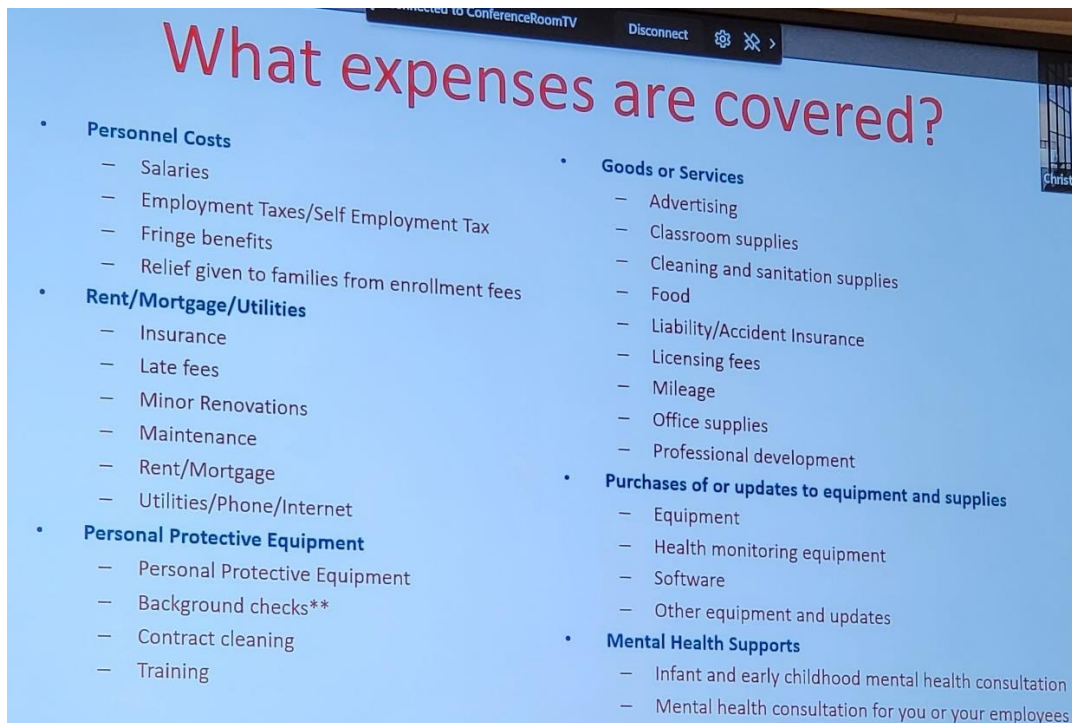
Panel: Support for Child Care Programs

- \$2500 start up grant for new providers
- Start up technical assistance
- Rebekah Meyer is our area's contact for Tier 2 resources.





Christina Ferguson - Sustainability Grants are now available through the Dept. of Children & Families. They can cover operational expenses to help maintain child care programs during the pandemic. Programs must be licensed permanently through KDHE. Must be in substantial compliance with no pending or open complaints or operating under a consent agreement. Applications opened on March 1st and go through November 20, 2022. Award amounts range from \$1800 all the way up to \$18,000 for a center.



Local funding Sources

- Look at K-State Research and Extension for food program options
- USDA grants
- Network Kansas – networkkansas.org
- Dane G. Hansen
- Heartland Community Foundation
- Child Care Aware of Kansas: safety/health and business grants

Community Stories and Backbone Supports

Community Session Two

Goals for Child Care Task Force of Ellis County

- Host community provider meetings and connect with prospective providers and current providers. Identify new providers during these meetings.
 - Connect with Amy and Melissa to see if we can run background checks at those meetings.
- Host June Membership Lunch and launch the concept of businesses pledging funds to help make child care sustainable in Ellis County (pay to play concept).
 - We would also discuss the option of starting a fund through the Heartland Community Foundation. Use residual funds to invest back into child care.
- Identify specific projects to add spots for child care and apply for grants to open those spots.
- Work to establish a workforce pool.
 - Meet with educational facilities to discuss grant funds obtained from KU.

- Create a county-wide child care provider benefit package.
- Send out a survey to members to see their interest in participating through discount program.

Community Share Out