



First Children's Finance

Dream Up! Grant Summary

United Way of Greater Chippewa County

Chippewa and Eau Claire County, WI

This document is archived. It is kept only for reference purposes, so it is no longer being updated and documents may not meet accessibility standards. If you need this content in a different format, please email DCFMBDECEProjectGrowth@wisconsin.gov.



Table of Contents

Strategic Supply Planning	1
Core Team	3
Community Insights	4
Supply Demand Gap Analysis	5
Quality Rating and Improvement System Overview	6
Workforce	7
Data Overview	8
Core Team Planning Meeting	9
Goals	10
Project Recommendations	11
References	12

Strategic Supply Planning

The Strategic Child Care Supply Planning Process is a facilitated community planning process designed to engage a Core Team of community leaders to support and expand the child care capacity in their community. First Children’s Finance works with the Core Team to understand the current child care landscape and create goals to address child care needs.

This program was made possible by Grant Number 90TP007601 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Background

United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley – Chippewa and Eau Claire, WI

The United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley was selected to engage in community consultation regarding the supply of child care, through the Dream Up! Child Care Strategic Supply Planning Process. Funding for this work is provided by a *Preschool Development Grant (PDG)* received by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. In this process, a Core Team lead by Andy Neborak, from United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley, participated in a process that included:



- 8 hours of facilitated meetings by First Children’s Finance National Team Staff
- Identification of goals to increase high-quality child-care slots
- Planning support, facilitation, and technical assistance from First Children’s Finance
- A Strategic Child Care Supply Plan that guides United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley’s Core Team in efforts to increase its supply of high-quality child care.

Community Information

The United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley is based in Eau Claire County, Wisconsin and serves both Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties in the Western Region of Wisconsin. They applied for the Dream Up! Strategic Supply Planning Process and were awarded participation with the Fall Dream Up! Strategic Supply Plan Cohort. Each application included a geographic region the Core Team planned to focus on, referred to as ‘the community’. The United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley included the zip codes and corresponding communities listed in Figure 1 as their geographic region and defined community. This geographic region is the focus of the Strategic Supply Plan.

Cities	Zip Codes	Cities	Zip Codes
Augusta	54722	Holcombe	54745
Cadott	54727	Jim Falls	54748
Cornell	54732	New Auburn	54757
Fall Creek	54742		

Figure 1: Defined Zip Codes | Community Application Process

Core Team

The following people participated in the Core Team meetings to address the child care supply needs in United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley's defined community. The primary contact for this project is Core Team Lead, Andy Neborak, from United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley.

Name	Organization Affiliation
CORE TEAM LEAD: Andy Neborak	Executive Director United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley
CORE TEAM MEMBERS:	
Renee Ernsting	Director Child Care Partnership, Western Dairyland EOC
Kaylynn Winegar	Vice President of Workforce Initiatives Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce
Michelle Farrow	Workforce Development Coordinator Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce
Chellsy Schmitt	Owner Little Monkey Family Child Care
Michelle Endvick	Owner Learning 4 Life Family Child Care
Leanne O'Bryan	Director Rachel's Place Early Learning Center
Janet Govin	Owner and Director 123 Look at Me Learning
Amanda Dohms	Program Director of Child Care Services Chippewa Valley Technical College
Angela Jones	Assistant Professor University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
Brook Berg	Director of Community Engagement Mayo Clinic Health System Northwest WI
Ann Teuteberg	B-3 Program Coordinator Chippewa County
Sara Larsen	Business & Communications Specialist City of Eau Claire
Harrison Anderson	Child Care Director Chippewa Valley YMCA, Chippewa Fall Locations
Kelly Christianson	Lead Community Impact Director United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley
Tracy Fleck	Business Child Care Advocate
Julie Brunner	Administrative Assistant 123 Look at me Learning
Tasha Weiss	Programs Director Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce
Nicki Boos	Human Resources Manager TTM Technologies

Community Insights

Research by the Core Team was conducted and provided as part of the application process. First Children's Finance provided research and statistics regarding child care needs and sustainable child care solutions (see Figure 2). During Strategic Supply Plan meetings, this data was reviewed with the Core Team to better understand their community's child care challenges.

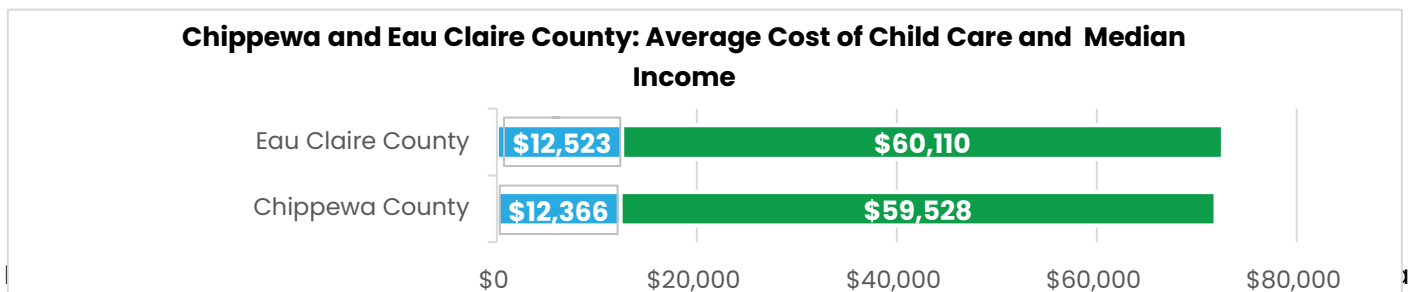
The United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley provided demographic data in their initial application that highlighted the community's need for affordable child care solutions.

The reported demographics included:

- *There are 33% of households in Chippewa County and 39% of households in Eau Claire counties that are earning wages below the threshold defined as the 'cost of living'.*
- *The cost of infant care in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties is costing 20.8% of a family's income.*
- *In April 2022, nearly two-thirds of employers reported employee absenteeism due to lack of child care; three-fourths of employers have experienced the need to create flexible schedules for their employees to be able to retain their positions.*

**Excerpt from Dream Up! Application*

Figure 2: Chippewa and Eau Claire County Cost of Care and Median Income | Wisconsin PDG Sandbox Data



regarding the annual cost of child care in Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties. Figure 2 shows the average annual cost for infant care compared to the county's median income, in both counties the cost is over 20 percent of the median income. The cost is over double what is affordable according to the Federal Government but is still under what the true cost of providing high-quality care would be for a program. True cost of care is not just what a provider charges a family or receives in the state child care subsidy; true cost is what it costs to provide high-quality early learning experiences, including the value of personnel and non-personnel resources used to manage a program, as well as resources that last for multiple years. In Wisconsin, research conducted has the true cost of care at \$1,800 a month for an infant. Families simply cannot afford the true cost of care, leaving providers required to charge less than what it truly costs to provide high-quality care.

Supply Demand Gap Analysis

As part of the Strategic Supply Planning Process, the Core Team was provided with information to help them understand factors that contribute to child care challenges. First Children’s Finance leveraged different data sources to create an illustrative picture of the demand for child care in the community (see Figure 3). These data sources include U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin’s Department of Children and Families Data, and First Children’s Finance research and data.

The Supply Demand Gap Analysis completed by First Children’s Finance for United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley dated August 2022, shows a deficit of 731 slots for children birth to 5 living in households where all available parents are in the workforce. As a result, First Children’s Finance found capacity of licensed and regulated full day year-round care in United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley’s defined community at only 133 slots.

Figure 2: COMMUNITY Supply-Demand Gap Analysis | First Children’s Finance

Zip Code	City	Licensed Family Child Care	Licensed Group Child Care Center	Certified Child Care	Expected Child Care Capacity	Expected Number of Children Under Age 5	Expected Child Care Need
54722	Augusta	3	0	0	20	202	181
54727	Cadott	1	1	0	21	155	133
54732	Cornell	0	1	0	26	91	65
54742	Fall Creek	0	1	1	45	248	202
54745	Holcombe	0	0	0	0	45	45
54748	Jim Falls	2	0	0	14	16	2
54757	New Auburn	1	0	0	7	109	102
TOTAL		7	3	1	133	866	731

How Is the Need Supported Today?

When there is a gap in the licensed and regulated child care slots available in a community compared to the children potentially needing care in the community, families find unique ways to meet their needs outside of licensed or regulated child care. The following are common ways that parents may fill their need for child care and may be present in United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley's defined community.

Legal Unlicensed (unregistered) Care / Family, Friends, & Neighbors

Friends, family, and neighbors may provide care for up to three (3) children without a license; however, under Wisconsin law, no person may provide care and supervision for four (4) or more children under the age of seven (7) for less than 24 hours a day. Care for four (4) or more children under the age of seven (7) would require a provider to obtain a license to operate a child care center from Wisconsin's Department of Children and Families.

Illegal Unlicensed/Unregistered Care

Child care is provided in a setting that requires licensing or regulation, but the provider has chosen to provide care without the proper license or following regulatory guidelines.

Under-Employment / Shift Alignment

Parents may work split shifts, work part-time, or limit their work hours to stay home with their children. There may be children in the community whose parents have left the workforce and are not looking for employment because of child care challenges. These families are not included in the data in this report, but parents may enter the workforce if viable child care options were available.

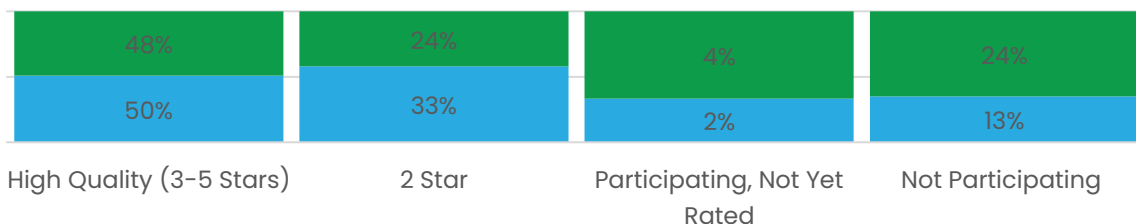
Out of Area Care

Parents with children in the region studied may take their child to care outside of this report's area. This may be due to parents' work location, access to care, or other reasons.

Quality Rating and Improvement System Overview

First Children's Finance examined state-wide information about the number of child care programs that are participating in the YoungStar Program (see Figure 4). YoungStar is Wisconsin's child care Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that identifies programs that go above and beyond the general licensing requirements to obtain higher quality in their child care program.

Providers Participating in YoungStar



Workforce

Child Care Workforce

First Children's Finance examined the child care workforce in Wisconsin. Many individuals in the workforce have formal educational backgrounds and more than a decade of experience. However, more than half of early childhood educators rely on some form of public assistance and do not receive benefits. The Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison reported a 40% turnover rate in the Early Childhood Education field. Figure 5 shows data collected for the Western Region of Wisconsin and shows 19% of the workforce anticipates leaving the field within the next two years. The cost of care is high for families, and the cost of delivery is high for providers. Often, the impact is reflected in child care worker wages. The First Five Years Fund researched the average compensation rate for child care workers and found in Wisconsin; the average hourly rate is \$10.66. The annual salary of \$22,170.00 is below the poverty line for a working family.



Early Education Workforce Survey

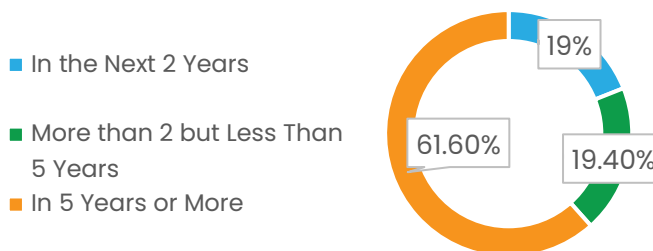


Figure 5: Survey of Center-Based Teachers | Institute for Research and Poverty

Primary Industries

Additionally, First Children's Finance examined the top industries in Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties using available census data. The top industries (see Figure 6) can impact child care needs based on when shift workers are needed, as well as beginning and end time of employee shifts. In both counties, two of the top industries are manufacturing and retail trade. Often, these industries call for second and third shift employees. Without sustainable child care options during these shifts, hiring new employees and retaining current employees in fields such as manufacturing can quickly become a challenge.

During Strategic Supply Plan meetings with First Children's Finance, the Core Team was asked to brainstorm ways to address the need of child care for all types of working families within their community.

1. Manufacturing

2. Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance

3. Retail Trade

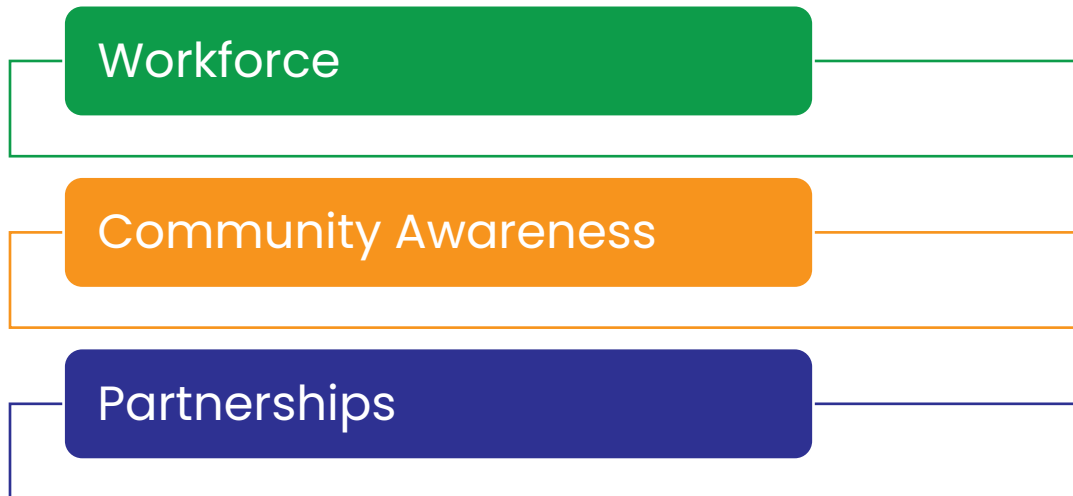
Figure 6: Top Industries | U.S. CENSUS 2021

Data Overview

1 Certified Family Child Care Programs (*DCF Licensing Information)	7 Licensed Family Child Care Programs (*DCF Licensing Information)
3 Licensed Group Child Care Programs (*DCF Licensing Information)	48% of providers have a 3–5 Star Rating (DCF Sandbox Data)
63% of zip codes are considered child care deserts (DCF Sandbox Data)	866 children under 5 with all parents in the workforce (*ACS 5 Year Estimates)
133 *current expected child care capacity (*FCF Calculation May 2022)	731 birth to age 5 slots needed (*FCF Calculation)
\$1031 average monthly cost of care (DCF Sandbox Data)	

Core Team Planning Meeting

Throughout the winter of 2023, the Core Team, a group of community stakeholders interested in the supply and sustainability of child care met to discuss the child care shortage in United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley, and to develop strategies to increase the number of high-quality child care slots. Below are the primary topics addressed in the conversations and the goals developed to address the child care shortage.



After discussing these core topics, the focus was placed on primary areas of need, where current resources should be directed, and where additional resources are needed. The Core Team created the following goals to support the child care needs in the community.

Goals



Goal:

Develop community awareness and understanding about child care, (the importance of quality and current needs, challenges, and solutions).

Project Team Members: Brooke Berg, Carla Sumner, Amanda Dohms, Jenny Starck, Renee Ernsting, Michelle Farrow

Objective of the Goal: Learn about specific child care needs, educate the community of quality child care and the challenges that surround the field, and employers will be educated on issues related to child care in their community and presented with potential solutions.



Goal:

Utilize a partnership with University of Wisconsin Eau Claire to conduct a survey of the current Chippewa Valley early care and education workforce to understand workers' perspectives related to workplace climate.

Project Team Members: Angela Jones, Kaylynn Winegar, Rod Jones, Renee Ernsting, Michelle Farrow

Objective of the Goal: The results of the survey will be used to better support post COVID early care and education workforce retention and identify the ways in which local leadership can strengthen workplace climate and sustainability.



Goal:

Develop and market a family child care network that has monthly meetings with a regular participation rate of 25% within the first year which can be utilized as a resource for prospective providers.

Project Team Members: Michelle Endvick, Andy Neborak, Renee Ernsting, Jenny Starck, Leanne O'Bryan, Harrison Anderson, Amanda Dohms, Chellsy Schmitt

Objective of the Goal: Additional family child care in our rural areas grown through support.

Project Recommendations

The United Way of Chippewa Valley is located in beautiful western Wisconsin and has a long history of community partnerships. The Core Team is a committed and dedicated group of individuals that are heavily invested in the child care landscape of their community. First Children's Finance recommends that the Core Team engage in the following activities:

1

Always run financials before committing to a project – look for a broad base of support.

As new and expansion child care projects are discussed to achieve your goals run financials and feasibility reports specific to child care programming. Having an accurate understanding of enrollment numbers, staffing needs and tuition rates are needed to create sustainability in the current child care climate. These numbers are always changing due to staffing changes, program expansions and closures, keeping a pulse on the needs of the community and providers will lead to successful and sustainable child care programming.

2

Continue to engage the community in this project – many hands make light work.

As noted in the application and throughout the Strategic Supply Plan Process, The United Way of Greater Chippewa Valley has excellent partnerships with local businesses and community resources. Continue to partner with these organizations and engage the local community in supporting and increasing the child care workforce. Build a broad base of community support through presentations, community events and news stories so that as needs of child care programs change, the community can continue to support in ways that will benefit child care programs, children, families and the workforce as a whole. Local businesses are usually eager to help if they know exactly what is needed.

3

Continue to involve existing providers – they are part of the solution.

Using the Family Child Care network, continue to provide resources to local child care programs, reach out to the center-based programs to better understand their needs. Efforts to ensure current child care providers feel supported and have access to resources they need may help to keep child care providers working in the field. The outreach to support and attract members of the community can also encourage others begin the process of opening certified or licensed child care business.

References

- First Five Years Fund. (2022, June). *Wisconsin – Federal Support for Early Learning & Care Opportunities*. Retrieved from https://www.ffyf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/FFYF_Wisconsin_2022.pdf.
- Ros Pilarz, A., Claessens, A., Awkward-Rich, L., & Hoitling, J. (2021, September). *Wisconsin's Early Care and Education Workforce: Summary Report on the Survey of Center-Based Teachers*. Retrieved from <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/pdf/pdg/wi-ece-workforce-teacher-report.pdf>.
- United States Census Bureau. (2022, December). *2021: American Community Survey - 5 year estimates*. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>.
- University of Wisconsin Public Health Institute. (2022). *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps*. Retrieved from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/wisconsin/adams?year=2022>.
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. (2022, February). *Preschool Development Grant Sandbox 2 Data*. Retrieved from <https://dcf.wisconsin.govpdg/sandbox/data2>.
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. (2022). *Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report: Annual Report for Calendar Year 2021*. Retrieved from <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/reports/pdf/can.pdf>.
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. (2022, May). *Wisconsin Department of Children and Families: Certified Child Care Directories*. Retrieved from <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cccertification/cc-directories>.
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. (2022, May). *Wisconsin Department of Children and Families: Licensed Child Care Directories*. Retrieved from <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cclicensing/lcc-directories>.