



# First Children's Finance Dream Up! Grant Summary

## Crown Jewel Academy

Racine, WI

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## 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.

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# Background

## Crown Jewel Academy – Racine, WI

Crown Jewel Academy 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 Crystal McCollum, from Crown Jewel Academy, 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 Crown Jewel Academy’s Core Team in efforts to increase its supply of high-quality child care.

# Community Information

| Cities | Zip Codes |
|--------|-----------|
| Racine | 53401     |
|        | 53402     |
|        | 53403     |
|        | 53405     |

Crown Jewel Academy is based in Racine, Wisconsin. Racine is a vibrant, lakefront city in the Southeastern Region of Wisconsin. Crown Jewel Academy applied for the Dream Up! Strategic Supply Planning Process and were awarded participation in 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’. Crown Jewel Academy included the zip codes and corresponding communities listed in Figure 1 as their geographic region and defined community. This geographic region, with a population of approximately 102,000 residents, is the focus of the Strategic Supply Plan.

Figure 1: Crown Jewel Academy 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 Crown Jewel Academy’s defined community. The primary contact for this project is Core Team Lead, Crystal McCollum, Administrator, and Owner at Crown Jewel Academy.

| Name                                       | Organization Affiliation                                     |
|--|--|
| <b>CORE TEAM LEAD:</b><br>Crystal McCollum | Administrator and Owner   Crown Jewel Academy                |
| <b>CORE TEAM MEMBERS:</b>                  |  |
| Billy McCollum                             | Pastor   Crown Jewel Christian Services                      |
| Rayonna Lambiris                           | Director   Highborn House Childcare                          |
| Jessica Gonzales                           | Parent Volunteer   |
| Leanna Johnson                             | Early Childhood Associate   Higher Expectation               |
| Aloysius Nelson                            | Department of Veteran Services   Kenosha, WI                 |
| Yalanda Ludtke                             | Director of Collaborative Partnerships   Higher Expectations |
| Tanya Wooden                               | Childcare Provider   Heavenly Hands                          |
| Jennifer de Montmollin                     | Chief Program Officer   YWCA USA                             |
| Zyaire Strowder                            | Community School Coordinator   United Way of Racine County   |
| Sylvia Bolten                              | Apostle   Rhema Ministries, Inc.                             |
| Jessica Guerreca                           | Supervisor   Crown Jewel Academy                             |
| Amy Shephard                               | Director of Early Learning   Racine Unified School District  |
| Elizabeth Erickson                         | Engagement Director   Higher Expectations                    |
| Terina Nelson                              | Owner   A-N-T Transportation                                 |
| Sibony Jackson                             | Owner   Kezzy’s Cash Boutique                                |
| Dr. Silvia Johnson Jones                   | Executive Director   County of Lake College                  |

## 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. During Strategic Supply Plan meetings, this data was reviewed with the Core Team to better understand their community's child care challenges.

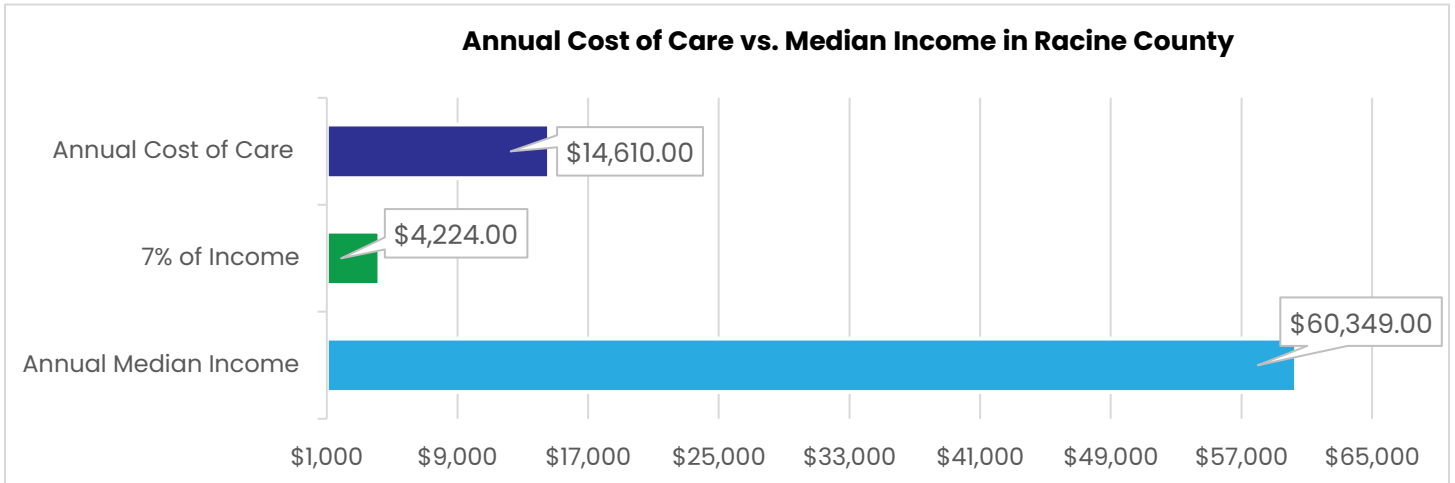
Crown Jewel Academy provided demographic data in their initial application that highlighted the community's need for affordable child care solutions.

The reported data included:

- *As of 2021 the US Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that over 15,000 Racine County residents remain unemployed, many cited as not being able to find child care availability nor qualified care takers.*
- *The African American community has suffered extreme risk factors due to lack of resources and affordability of childcare including homelessness, illness, and crime.*
- *Black Americans who make up over 23% of the total population have an unemployment rate of 13.1% making [child care] affordability an even greater issue overall.*

\*Excerpt from Dream Up! Application

Figure 2: Cost of Care vs. Median Income in Racine County | PDG Sandbox



During the Strategic Supply Planning process, First Children's Finance shared with the Core Team the data regarding the annual median household income in Racine County compared to the annual cost of care. Figure 2 shows that the annual cost of care in Racine County is \$14,610. This 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 defined as the dollar value of all resources used to provide high-quality early childhood care and education. 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 the 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 Racine dated August 2022, shows a deficit of 1,899 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 Racine at 2,474 children, which is significant compared to the 4,373 children under the age of five in the defined geographic region.

Figure 3: Supply-Demand Gap Analysis | First Children’s Finance Analysis

| 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 |
|--------------|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 53401        | Racine | 0                          | 0                                | 0                    | 0                            | 0                                       | 0                        |
| 53402        | Racine | 2                          | 12                               | 4                    | 615                          | 1055                                    | <b>440</b>               |
| 53403        | Racine | 2                          | 8                                | 6                    | 690                          | 1166                                    | <b>475</b>               |
| 53404        | Racine | 1                          | 4                                | 5                    | 360                          | 614                                     | <b>253</b>               |
| 53405        | Racine | 2                          | 7                                | 3                    | 768                          | 1209                                    | <b>290</b>               |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |        | <b>7</b>                   | <b>31</b>                        | <b>18</b>            | <b>2474</b>                  | <b>4373</b>                             | <b>1899</b>              |



## 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 Racine.

### 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.

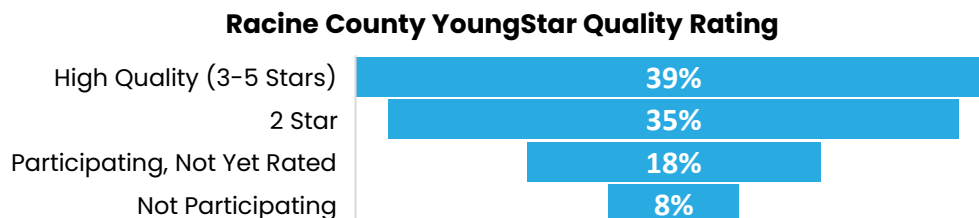
### Out of Area Care

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.

Figure 4: Racine County YoungStar Ratings | PDG Sandbox



# 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 Southeastern Region of Wisconsin and shows 32.3% 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

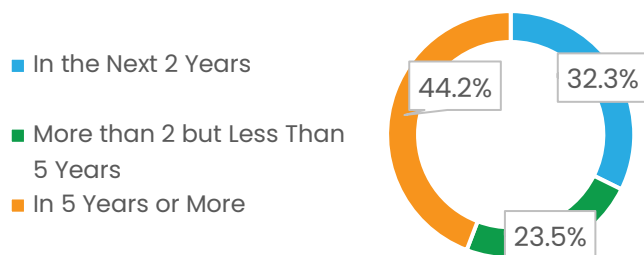


Figure 5: Survey of Center-Based Teachers | Institute for Research and Poverty

## Primary Industries

Additionally, First Children’s Finance examined the top industries in Racine County 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 Racine County, 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.



Figure 6: Top Industries in Racine County | U.S. CENSUS 2021

## Data Overview

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>18</b><br>Certified Family Child Care Programs<br>(*DCF Licensing Information)       | <b>7</b><br>Licensed Family Child Care Programs<br>(*DCF Licensing Information)                  |
| <b>31</b><br>Licensed Group Child Care Programs<br>(*DCF Licensing Information)         | <b>39%</b><br>of providers have a 3–5 Star Rating<br>(DCF Sandbox Data)                          |
| <b>25%</b><br>of zip codes are considered<br>child care deserts<br>(DCF Sandbox Data)   | <b>4,373</b><br>children under 5 with all<br>parents in the workforce<br>(*ACS 5 Year Estimates) |
| <b>2,474</b><br>*current expected<br>child care capacity<br>(*FCF Calculation May 2022) | <b>1,899</b><br>birth to age 5 slots needed<br>(*FCF Calculation)                                |
| <b>\$1,217</b><br>average monthly cost of care<br>(DCF Sandbox Data)                    | <b>102,463</b><br>Racine defined zip code population   |

## 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 Racine, 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



### **SMART Goal:**

Goal 1: By June 2023, open a new child care center, High Born House, that will create and sustain 60 new daycare slots in Racine, WI.

**Project Team Members:** Crystal McCollum, Rayonna Lambiris, and Tanya Wooden.

**Objective of the Goal:** Address the child care need in Racine County by opening a new center and assisting with furnishings and safety equipment.



### **SMART Goal:**

Goal 2: By May 2023, assist Heavenly Hands Child Care Center with purchasing office supplies and curriculum for their program.

**Project Team Members:** Crystal McCollum and Tanya Wooden

**Objective of the Goal:** Support an existing child care center to promote continued sustainability.



### **SMART Goal:**

Goal 3: By June 2023, support the opening of Piccadilly Square Child Care Center in Racine to increase child care slots available in the community. Purchase furnishings, safety equipment and complete facility updates. In addition, assist with the facility lease, recruitment and staffing and purchase of curriculum.

**Project Team Members:** Billy McCollum, Rayonna Lambiris, Leanna Jones, Yalanda Lutke, and Crystal McCollum

**Objective of the Goal:** To create 100 new child care slots in Racine, WI with the opening of Piccadilly Square Child Care Center and lessen the child care need within the community.



### **SMART Goal:**

Goal 4: By July 2023, host a 3-day community child care development symposium with the intent of creating a yearly sponsored event.

**Project Team Members:** Crystal McCollum, Rayonna Lambiris, Leanna Jones, Yalanda Lutke, Billy McCollum, Amy Shephard, and Tanya Wooden

**Objective of the Goal:** Attract over 10,000 community members to an educational and supportive child care resource event.



### **SMART Goal:**

Goal 5: To promote employee recruitment and retention at Crown Jewel Academy.

**Project Team Members:** Crystal McCollum, Rayonna Lambiris

**Objective of the Goal:** Award retention stipends to employees and increase retention of staff at Crown Jewel Academy.

## Project Recommendations

Racine County, Wisconsin is a vibrant area with a community of potential partnerships that can help bring services to the area with an increased awareness. Crown Jewel Academy has a committed Core Team 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 Goals 1, 2 and 3, run financials and feasibility reports specific to child care programming in the specific neighborhoods that the centers are planned in. Having an accurate understanding of enrollment potential, staffing needs and tuition rates are needed to create sustainability in the current child care climate. Using child care market projections and local industry trends will prove beneficial for all the start-up and expansion projects listed in Goals 1, 2 and 3.

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2

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

The Core Team members from Crown Jewel Academy have established great relationships with Racine Unified School District and other community members to assist in the Child Care Symposium. Goal 4 provides the framework for ongoing community partnership and potential corporate support for the child care crisis. Continue to leverage these partnerships to maintain the attention of local businesses and increase the available support to child care facilities. Community investment will be critical to support new child care facilities so they can maintain quality staffing.

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3

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

Ongoing support for all existing child care professionals in the area should be considered to retain current slots available in the community. Soliciting feedback from current child care business entrepreneurs will provide an inside view of trends they are experiencing, both positive and negative. Efforts should be made to ensure all child care providers continue to feel supported and have access to resources they need to stay in the field. Use information gathered to support and attract members of the community to begin the process of opening regulated child care, so everyone in the field feels valued and child care availability expands.

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