



## Dedicated to Child Care for 40 Years

### “Child Care is my Heart”

Sandy Amundson’s journey with child care began when she was raising her own children and realized there weren’t many options available to her for child care. Sandy had previously earned a degree in Elementary Education (K-3) and decided to open a group child care program in Oconomowoc, WI. In 1986, Sandy moved to Appleton and began working at Faith Child Care Center in 1990. She has held many roles at this center, starting as an infant room teacher, then becoming Program Director and is now working as the Administrative Director.

### Improvements in Environments

Since engaging in YoungStar, Sandy explained that Faith Child Care has seen an improvement in their outdoor environments by utilizing the micro-grant program and purchasing stationary equipment. This year they plan on using their micro-grant to add stationary musical chimes to their outdoor play space. Sandy expressed that “Children deserve the very best environment that we can provide for them,” adding that they have added other features to their outdoor place space such as a mud kitchen and a smaller play space for children under two years with funding from the program.

Faith Child Care also benefits from YoungStar by using Technical Consultants to give instruction on keeping

the environment up to date and developmentally appropriate for their children. Additionally, the center participates in the Healthy Bites and Active Early initiatives to ensure that children are practicing healthy habits at a young age. Staff have also participated in many trainings including Pyramid Model training. Sandy has noticed that since participating in YoungStar and attending these trainings, the quality of interactions between staff and children has improved.

### Staff that Sticks Around

One of the most unique aspects of Faith Child Care is the longevity of staff. Of the 23 total employees, 13 have been with Faith Child Care for over 12 years and 3 have been there for more than 25 years. “The longevity of our staff gives our center the feeling of home for children.” One of the legacies that Sandy leaves with Faith Child Care is how she cared for her staff and ensured that they were at their very best when working with children. After nearly 30 years at Faith Child Care, Sandy reminisces, “I just wanted to create a family.” She is grateful for all of the relationships she has formed with the families and staff in her years at the program. Sandy is retiring in August and has made a lasting impact on the staff and children at Faith Child Care.

## Wisconsin’s Stars are Shining

YoungStar informs parents, recognizes quality providers and brings resources and support to programs committed to improving quality. But what it’s really all about is helping Wisconsin children shine bright.