

Child Care Task Force Initial Meeting (4/5/2021) – Chat Discussion

Dir Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development

We will post the slides on the child care taskforce page as well as send them to you so that you can share with your peers as well.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

Many childcare centers also post job openings on social media rather than paying for job site postings, so this number does not include all openings.

Dir Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development

We do scrape from social media and free sites. It also does not cost anything to post a job on IowaWorks.gov

4 Adelheid Spitzli

I am a child development home provider, and I and several other providers have been looking for funding to open centers, but we had no idea about this

Dir Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development

We can follow up with you after the meeting to get you more information

Deb VanderGaast, RN

When I was looking for funding to open my center, my greatest barrier was the age of the building I purchased. All Federal funding required an environmental impact study for any building over 50 years old. I couldn't afford the study.

4 Adelheid Spitzli

biggest barrier in Ames is finding a building at all, especially with outdoor space attached

Dir Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development

That's why we are hoping the legislature will fund the Gov's recommendation to expand the child care challenge fund which would help with these types of investments

Emily Schmitt

www.futurereadyiowa.gov/childcare-taskforce

Janee Harvey

Was there anything in the presentation that was surprising?

Jennifer Crall

What resources are available for child care providers for the business-side of their operation?

4 Adelheid Spitzli

If we have ideas that we think could help, what would be the best way to share them? Yes, hit it out of the ball park! I want Iowa to be an example to the rest of the states on how to provide childcare. We should be a leader in quality care and options for families!

Teree Caldwell-Johnson

THANKS!

Deb VanderGaast, RN

I think it is important to remember that just building new centers will not solve the problem if we don't solve the problems that are causing centers to close.

4 Adelheid Spitzli

very true, Deb

Teree Caldwell-Johnson

Could not agree more. Sustainability of existing centers is equally important.

Jeannine Laughlin

Why are we not addressing CCA reimbursement rates? Some of the challenges we face as an industry can be solved with higher reimbursement rates. In rural areas, centers would be able to sustain operations if they were better funded. We could fill our centers with children from all income levels if rates were higher, better serving families who rely on CCA funding.

Julie Allison

Jennifer- we will reach out to you regarding business-side of operation.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

Please reach out to me too. I have the exact same issue

Julie Allison

will do Deb

Janee Harvey

CCA provider rates are expected to be raised this summer. The updated rate will be 50th percentile of the Market Rate Survey that was completed in December. The anticipated increased rate will total around \$13.3M.

Julie Allison

The updated rate will begin at 50%ile and move up dependent on QRS rating.

Jeannine Laughlin

Thank you. Good to know.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

50% of market rate is the problem. We are already underfunded, and expected to take even less for the families that have the most challenges.

Julie Allison

QRS level 5 will be paid at 75%ile

Jay - CUCCC

HF 292

Erika Fuentes

I believe reimbursement rate will be addressed, we have that as a priority and I believe DHS recognizes it , I say that because of the support we got when covid began with stipends and unlimited absences.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

We used to all get 75%. Only 3% of providers have a QRS rating of 5 stars.

Dir Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development

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Eric Kohlsdorf

regarding CCA reimbursement, also understand that in order to accept CCA for the lower income families, an option to offset the loss of revenue (while still incurring the same expenses) is to raise rates for private pay families.

Miranda Niemi

However, we cannot keep raising rates for private pay families because then they won't be able to afford it either.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

Our private pay families can't afford to pay more, so it is not realistic to shift our losses on CCA to them.

Eric Kohlsdorf

Agreed, Deb! And so we've even looked at not accepting CCA children (which is counter productive to our goals)!

Erika Fuentes

Its true, the category of "working low income" has expanded just since covid happened. Financial security is much harder to find, and as providers we should expand the amount of families we can help. Making eligibility broader.

Emily Schmitt

We could refer to pg 52 of the GERAB final report for some benchmark recommendations for recruitment and retaining workforce:
https://governor.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/GovAdvisoryBoard_Report_112020_F.pdf

Great point Teree!

Janee Harvey

Per Erika's observation, the task force members should be aware that Iowa's eligibility for CCA is at 145% of the Federal Poverty Level. This equates to \$16.40/hour for a single parent with two children. Some of the articles sent in advance of this meeting show how Iowa compares to other states.

Eric Kohlsdorf

Property tax relief for licensed centers is also an option that could be implemented. For example, in our three centers we pay roughly \$200,000 in property tax... if we could have relief on that if we can show we pay employees that same amount, we could start to address the shortage of workforce.

Emily Schmitt

Josh - Checkout pg 87 of the GERAB report = public/private partnerships too.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

I agree. Property tax relief would help.

Joshua Laraby

I agree on the consideration for property tax exemption

Deb VanderGaast, RN

I missed the info on the homework assignment.

Emily Schmitt

Deb - homework = if you had a crown for a day - what would you do regardless of money or policy to help address Iowa's Child Care needs?

Roy's iPad

There are multiple bills supporting childcare efforts pending before the Senate that need to move forward. Any updates?

David Steen

HF260 passed the Senate last week.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

Increasing the number of the children in unregistered daycare homes. It de-incentivizes registration.

Danielle Hale

I believe this might be what you are asking about? <https://iowaccrr.org/providers/qrs/>

Jeannine Laughlin

I think QRS is great and I understand the differences with QRS and NAEYC accreditation but we really need to look at the opportunity to loop NAEYC accreditation into QRS level 5

Jenna Ramsey Stanton

Will discussions regarding preschool take place in any group? It seems like there is a lot of discussion on preschool specific things as well. Thank you!

Ryan Page

Hi Jeannine, DHS has worked with a QRS Oversight Committee for a few years and are working on a new QRIS system (IQ4K)

Jeannine Laughlin

Thanks Ryan. I think that has been delayed from a summer fall out

Miranda Niemi

I also helped with an alignment with the IQ4K and how it works with NAEYC accreditation with Iowa AEYC

Deb VanderGaast, RN

QRS level 5 should be eligible for 100% of market rate to reward providers for exceeding expectations. Level three is average, so we should get what was the average reimbursement - 75%. The reduction in reimbursement for those at level 1 & 2 would then be shifted to those at level 4&5

Amy Bice

Is there any way to tie in QRS rating with tax breaks for parents who don't qualify for CCA? Or providers who don't have CCA families who are rated with QRS? Excellent! Thanks

Jay - CUCCC

We have 3 NAEYC centers. We are only QRS 4 due to the large size of our centers and staff. The new QRIS, we would be lucky to be a 2.

Miranda Niemi

Jay-I agree. I have one large center and I am struggling as well due to the same issues.

Deb VanderGaast, RN

I am hearing from many providers that they have waiting lists, especially for infants and toddlers, and they have room, but they can't enroll any more children because they can't find staff. Childcare literally pays less than anything else.

Brian Pauly

I believe a good place to start would be looking at the Department of Defense Childcare policies and guidelines. They have been the gold standard for the last 28 years throughout the world. If we can

implement their policies and standards in Iowa then we could be the gold standard for the any states. This could tackle fee structure for parents, incentives for centers and homes, etc.

Miranda Niemi

I have 3 open spots for employees with a waitlist. Very little applicants to choose from.