MAPPING the Future of Adams County Child Care Convening Session One Results

Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Making a Difference in Rural Illinois

www.IIRA.org

Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455
www.IIRA.org

Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Survey Results......................................................................................................3
Adams County Data..............................................................................................4
Challenges.............................................................................................................5
Assets....................................................................................................................6
Brainstormed BHAGS..........................................................................................7-8

MAPPING PARTICIPANTS

Todd Bale                              Carol Nichols
Maria Berhorst                        Chad Rodgers
Jim Chamberlain                       Barb Schaller
Anthony Crane                         Christine Stevens
Anita Fretwell Hanke                  Dan Teefey
Amanda Goings                         Marla Willard
Emily Hawkinson                       Cheryl Williams
Amber Kappner                         Dennis Williams
Laurel Klinkenberg
Survey Results

The Community Foundation Serving West Central Illinois & Northeast Missouri in collaboration with Western Illinois University conducted a survey in March 2019 to measure child care perceptions, needs, and opportunities in Adams County.

The survey was completed by 355 parents/guardians of children using or in need of child care and 21 child care providers, including family child care providers and child care center directors.

Survey Findings

• Parents/guardians in Adams County report their experience finding child care as very difficult, but providers cite barriers to increasing their child care capacity.
  * On a 10-point scale with “10” being the most difficult, 70 percent of parents/guardians ranked their experience finding child care between 7 and 10.
  * Increasing regulations, insufficient space, and the additional staff needed were ranked as top barriers for family child care providers to increase care capacity.

• Parents/guardian respondents are pleased with the direct care and attention that their children receive but indicate business and educational aspects as factors that need improvement.
  * Out of 13 characteristics, parents/guardians ranked safety, cleanliness, and having a nurturing environment as top characteristics of their current child care provider.
  * Having enough slots to meet child care needs, being affordable, and helping children be ready for school were ranked lowest.

• Although family child care providers indicated a desire or need to increase weekly rates, many parents/guardians find child care to be costly already.
  * Parents/guardians ranked satisfaction with child care costs as 2.57 on a 4-point scale, with 4 points indicating “very satisfied.”
  * Providers indicate the rising cost of groceries, utilities, and repairs to the care space as primary reasons for a needed or desired rate increase.
  * Of parents/guardians who are unsatisfied with their current child care arrangements (46 percent of respondents), most would be willing to pay $10 to $25 more per week for a provider that better fits their needs.

• Parents/guardians identified a nurturing environment as the top factor considered when deciding on care, but more than a quarter of respondents (26 percent) made their final decision because they had no other choices available.

• Although child care providers who responded are satisfied with their job, many plan to leave the field.
  * Ninety percent of respondents are somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with their role as a child care provider.
  * Fifty percent of respondents indicated they plan to leave the child care profession within the next six years.
  * Seeking a higher paying job is the top reason providers indicated for considering a career change.
ADAMS COUNTY DATA

Population:
- The population of Adams County is 67,103
- American Community Survey estimates a population loss of 1,412 from 2010 to 2018
- The population under 20 is 17,356
- The population under 5 years of age in Adams County is 4,232

Income and Poverty
- Median Household Income in Adams County is $48,454, compared to $61,229 for Illinois and $57,652 for the United States
- Almost 1 in 4 households in Adams County (24%) have an income less than $25,000
- The poverty rate in Adams County is 13.1%, slightly lower than the State at 13.5%
- Poverty rate for children from 5 to 17 years of age is 15.8% (1,701 children)
- 871 children under 5 (22.1%) are living in poverty

School Enrollment
- In Adams County, there are 17,661 youth enrolled in school
- 858 children aged 3 and 4 are enrolled in school
- There are 9,643 children aged 5 to 14 enrolled in school in Adams County
CHALLENGES

Cost (2)
• Cost prohibitive
• Affordability

Non-Standard Hours (4)
• Shift-job - 3rd shift
• 2nd and 3rd shifts
• No non-standard hours for care
• Hours of care
  * Shift availability
  * Constraints with kid’s bedtime with 2nd and 3rd shifts
  * Flexibility

Retention (3)
• Turnover of staff at provider
• Turnover of teachers and providers (leaving because of pay)
• Staff retention

Lack of Space/Slots (3)
• Space
• No facilities/lack of space
• Limited market capacity

Transportation (2)
• Transportation (2)

Minimum Wage Increase (2)
• Rise of minimal wage
• Raising minimum wage

Qualified Staff (2)
• Educated teachers
• Qualified/affordable staff

Regulations/Paperwork (2)
• DCFS regulations
• Licensing process

Specialized/Emergency Care (2)
• No specialized care
  * Trauma care
  * Behavioral care
• No emergency care
  * Respite

Support (3)
• Lack of support
• Social/emotional training and support
• Employer support

Miscellaneous (5)
• Finding kids
• Desire
• Quality/cost balance
• Options
  * Finding balance of curriculum versus care
  * Limited availability
• Culture change/discrepancy with demanding parents but providers pay limitations and strict requirements of education and licenses

THEMES OF CHALLENGES

Cost (2)  Qualified Staff (2)
Lack of Non-standard Hours (4)  Regulations/Paperwork (2)
Retention (3)  Specialized/Emergency Care (2)
Lack of Space/Slots (3)  Support (3)
Transportation (2)  Miscellaneous (5)
Minimum Wage Increase (2)
Funding Assistance for providers/families (8)
- Subsidizing – YMCA
- United Way funding (2)
- Tracy Foundation
- Community foundation
- Have center with sliding scale options
- Child Care Assistance Program-help pay for care
- Tracy and community grant

Cooperation/Collaboration (4)
- Willing to come together to address
- Collective will to find solutions
- Working with school board
- Desire for community collaboration

Staff/Teachers (3)
- Caring staff
- Qualified staff
- Dedicated teachers – child care and home

Educational Resources (6)
- CCR training
- John Wood Community College (2)
- West Central Child Care Connection has library of resources
- Community college for training
- WCCC parent resources
- Quincy University - program (2)

Employer Programs/Support (4)
- Employer- Blessing Hospital – DOT Foods
- Start of employers offering care/incentives
- Some employer support
- Training resources

Local Nonprofits (8)
- Early childhood
- DCFS
- All Our Kids
- Resources like West Central Child Care Connection
- Great not for profit community
- West Central Child Care Connection
- Child Family Connection

Current Providers (7)
- 4 child care
- Existing quality care
- School age programs
- Many nurturing providers
- Good options for school-age care
- Cheerful Home - outreach
- ECFC (Quincy Public Schools Early Childhood Family Center)

Families (2)
- Families that want the best for their kids
- Parents

Miscellaneous (8)
- Strong faith community
- Young workforce in high school
- Effective word of mouth
- Child care mental health
- Lots of kids
- High standards
- Fun people
- Empty retail space and school buildings

Community (3)
- Community
- Community support
- Close knit community

Themes of Assets

Funding Assistance for providers/families (8)  Community (3)
Cooperation/Collaboration (4)  Local Nonprofits (8)
Staff/Teachers (3)  Current Providers (7)
Educational Resources (6)  Families (2)
Employer Programs/Support (4)  Miscellaneous (8)
Brainstormed Goals

Child Education/Preparation for School
1. Adams County child care providers are known in the region for the high quality education, social skills and discipline that the children receive to prepare them to begin school or for the next year in school.

Quantity of Care
2. Adams County has sufficient high quality child care providers that offer options to fill each family’s unique needs and priorities including weekend/night and emergency care as well as care for kids with special needs.

Possible strategies:
- Work with providers to offer night and weekend care
- Develop a crisis care center to care for kids when parents are suffering an emergency and providing support for kids who have suffered trauma/abuse
- Develop a coalition of government and non-governmental organizations to support the development of new child care facilities
- Partner with area churches and faith-based organizations to offer child care or expand current child care facilities
- Work with current providers to expand
- Encourage the development of new child care facilities in empty buildings
- Work with area schools to develop on-site child care centers to increase available care, as well as increase the level of instruction given to those training to enter the early childhood education field

Care for Low-Income Families
3. Low-income families in Adams County have an abundance of affordable high quality care available.

Possible strategies:
- Working with child care providers to reserve a certain number of slots for low income families
- Work with transportation providers to assist low income families in getting kids/families to and from child care
- Assist low income families to access programs they are eligible for

Business Support
4. Adams County child care providers have sustainable, financially secure businesses that are known for utilizing best practices in customer service, employee management, accounting, regulatory compliance, etc. and provide exceptional compensation and benefits for owners and employees.

Employer Provided Care
5. Many parents in Adams County enjoy employer provided child care thanks to programs to assist employers in offering on-site child care for the children of employees.
Brainstormed Goals

Workforce Development
6. Child care providers in Adams County benefit from a readily available high quality workforce trained in providing exemplary child care.

Possible strategies:
• Work with area schools to develop on-site child care centers to increase available care, as well as increase the level of instruction given to those training to enter the early childhood education field
• Work with area 2 and 4 year colleges to develop/expand training programs for early childhood education
• Promote training available in the area for those interested in working in early childhood education

Parental Support and Education
7. Adams County provides exceptional support, training and education to parents that has resulted in a very low rate of abuse and neglect.

Community Education and Support
8. Residents and businesses in Adams County understand the value of quality early childhood education for all children and are vocal advocates for providers.