

What Can Business and Economic Leaders Do?



Be informed – Ask employees about their child care arrangements and if they have any challenges with accessing affordable, quality child care and learn more about the availability of child care in the county where your business operates.

https://iowaccrr.org/data/2017_county_data_sheets/5_year_trend_data_2012_2017/



Provide child care resource information – In new hire packets, include information about how to find child care, critical questions to ask child care providers, and how quality child care can make a difference for children. Post child care information on employee bulletin boards in the lunchroom, near a photocopier and provide content information on the company's website. Child Care Resource and Referral of Iowa is a resource for local child care information and parent referrals. <https://iowaccrr.org/communities/>



Determine available employer tax benefits to support child care – Talk to your tax preparer about potential tax benefits available for employers to help employees with child care costs. For example, employers are eligible for federal tax credits in return for sponsoring child care on-site, sponsoring child care slots at a local child care center and supporting child care resource and referral agencies in your community to help your employees find child care. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2014-title26/pdf/USCODE-2014-title26-subtitleA-chap1-subchapA-partIV-subpartD-sec45F.pdf>



Join forces with advocates in your community – Support initiatives to strengthen the quality of child care and early learning. Learn about the work of or join the Early Childhood Iowa Area board in your community. Understand the goals and programs in your community so that as an employer you can be an effective partner. <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/local-early-childhood-boards>



Educate other business leaders through state or local Chamber of Commerce or economic development council meetings – Often local chambers of commerce and state business and economic development associations create a public agenda and convene members to hear presentations or discuss priority topics. Prepare to speak out about the need for high-quality child care and early learning settings. Ask fellow businesses to join in supporting investment in quality child care and early learning programs and urge that it be placed on the public policy agenda. The Iowa Women's Foundation is a resource for presentations to businesses and materials. <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/leading-way-guide-business-engagement-early-education>



Understand the issues and connect with your state and local legislators – Convey to policymakers your support for public investment in early education. Let policymakers know how important it is to view quality early learning as an economic development strategy that is vitally important to children, employees, employers, communities and citizens.



Raise visibility – Engage other business leaders to help raise the visibility of quality early education and care as a key link to economic growth, development, and success.