



IOWA WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION

Child Care Entrepreneurs



SOLUTION

Support and incentivize programs that **help more people become entrepreneurs** by starting a home-based child care program or opening a registered child care center.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child care is a family issue, a workforce issue and a community issue.



OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 6 IN IOWA

have all available parents in the labor force. But in many Iowa communities, child care is often inaccessible, unaffordable, or nonexistent.

Child care issues are not new, but have risen to a higher priority due to their pervasiveness, necessity and impact on businesses. Parents often encounter issues finding and/or retaining child care. In turn, employers experience reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, and difficulty retaining and finding employees. Ultimately, this impacts the local economy of communities throughout the state.

Supporting and incentivizing programs that help more people become entrepreneurs by starting a home-based child care program or opening a registered child care center is a solution that can provide an influx of child care spaces. Starting a local dialogue is a simple way to begin the discussion and process. It is imperative that communities understand the market and the needs of parents, employers, and most of all—children—in order to successfully implement a solution.

The success of child care programs depends on great leadership by strategic entrepreneurs.

An entrepreneur is a person who organizes and operates a business, often taking on greater than normal financial risks in order to do so. To support the development of new child care services in your community, complete the following four steps:

1. Identify entrepreneurs
2. Recruit entrepreneurs
3. Train entrepreneurs
4. Support entrepreneurs

Before starting a child care entrepreneur recruitment campaign, it is important that you have a vision for your community. You need to understand your community goals and objectives. Below are some examples that will help you start to visualize success in your community. Some basic questions to consider as you move forward with this campaign include:

- Do you have the high-energy entrepreneurs in your community?
- Are there finances available to enable success?
- Who are their customers? Where are their customers?

PROCESS

Identify Entrepreneurs

To start the process of identifying potential entrepreneurs, consider developing a few archetypes that highlight likely characteristics of new child care entrepreneurs. For example, they may be mothers or grandmothers already caring for their own children, or frequent babysitters who may be in a good position to expand their offerings by offering in-home care.

Once you've identified some likely characteristics of potential childcare entrepreneurs, think about where you could find or reach them. Examples may include story-time at the public library, church, exercise class, the doctor's office lobby, physical or digital message boards for schools, parks, or other children's programming.

Recruit Entrepreneurs

To recruit potential new child care entrepreneurs, put yourself mentally into their shoes. Consider their excitement as well as their fears and concerns related to opening a new child care business. With these ideas in mind, develop several short events and programs aimed at empowering potential new child care entrepreneurs. These could include sharing success stories and training them to overcome the common pitfalls of starting new businesses—and the real possibility of successfully navigating the challenges specific to child care businesses.

Train Entrepreneurs

Provide the skills needed to set up and run a successful child care program, including business and program curriculum. Help new business owners work through the steps of getting up and running. They will likely need some skill-building around both child care regulations, organizational management, and personal leadership.

Support Entrepreneurs

Provide mentorship opportunities, continuing education classes and support groups to build a network of support for the new entrepreneurs.

BEST PRACTICES/TESTIMONIALS

HOME-BASED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

- Nichole Stoutner (319) 461-1188
- Antsy Pants Daycare (Sandi Ropp) (319) 461-7391
- Dodds Simple Abundance (Jill) (319) 351-2396
- Julie Jensen (319) 358-1808

CENTER-BASED CHILD CARE

- Love-A-Lot Early Childhood Center (319) 351-0106
- Lionheart Early Learning (319) 337-8870
- Tipton Adaptive Day Care (563) 886-3143





SOLUTION

Support and incentivize programs that **help more women become entrepreneurs** by starting in-home daycares and opening registered child care centers

Why is this solution a good fit for your community?

What resources and connections already exist that support implementing this solution?

What resources and connections are needed to implement this solution?

Who should help make this solution happen?

List next steps.

