

SOUTHWESTERN MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL, INC.
REGION 8 CHILD CARE AWARE
1106 3RD AVENUE, WORTHINGTON MN 56187
507-376-4195

WORTHINGTON CHILD CARE SURVEY

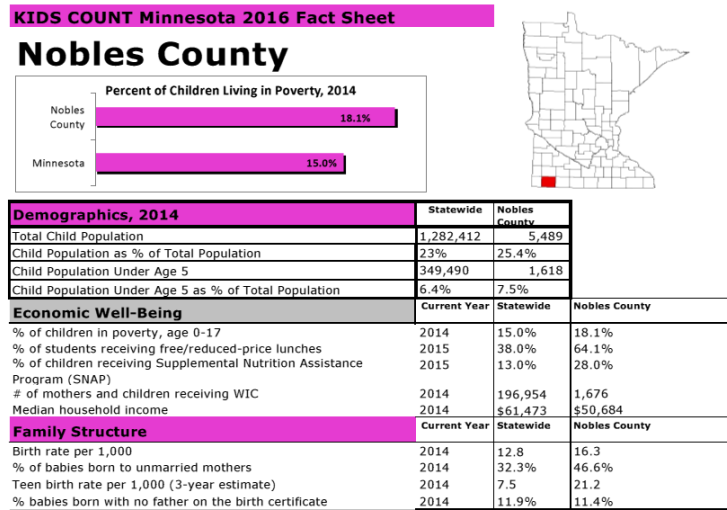
EMPLOYER RESPONSES

SURVEY DATES:
MARCH 26 – APRIL 9, 2018

BACKGROUND

Child care development is workforce development. Child care is an industry that supports the growth and development of communities. Without child care, parents with young children are not able to participate in educational growth or employment.

The issue of child care is a topic that crosses many sectors of the community: parents, grandparents, social service organizations, businesses, church and religious members, and corporations. This is not a new conversation. The need for child care has been increasing since the economic recovery and growth has decreased unemployment in SW MN. In February, 2017 KELOLAND news came to Worthington and aired a story about the child care crisis. The issues highlighted in that news story remain in place a year later. As employers experience challenges attracting and retaining employees, the need for quality child care continues to intensify. As 18.1% of children in Nobles County live in poverty, affordable child care is also a need.



<http://www.cdf-mn.org/research-library/MN-kids-count/kc-county-fact-sheets/2016/nobles.pdf>

“Depending on the age of the child, many employees must be wait listed with a daycare or have to utilize family/friends for coverage.” - Survey Respondent

This report compiles the results of an employer survey conducted from the period of March 26, 2018 – April 9, 2018. A total of 50 employers in Worthington responded to the survey.

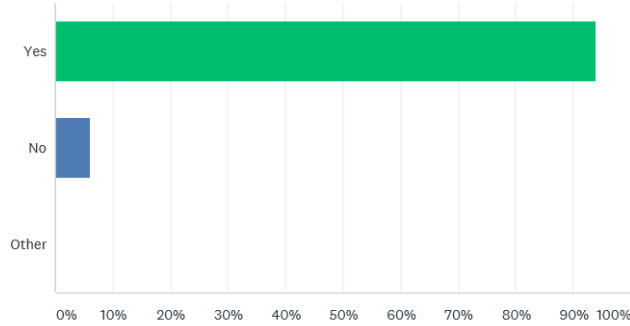
The survey questions were asked to gather information in the following areas:

- Availability of Child Care from the Employer’s Perspective
- Identifiable Areas of Child Care Need
- Child Care Issues / Challenges
- Potential Community Resources / Opportunities for Solutions

QUESTION 1: DO YOUR EMPLOYEES NEED CHILD CARE?

Do your employees need child care?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 0

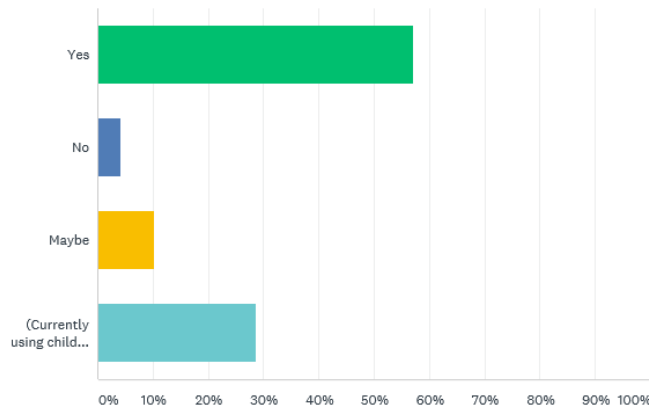


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	94.00% 47
▼ No	6.00% 3
▼ Other	0.00% 0
TOTAL	50

QUESTION 2: IF YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE NOT CURRENTLY USING CHILD CARE, WILL THEY NEED IT IN THE FUTURE?

If your employees are not currently using child care, will they need it in the future?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	57.14% 28
▼ No	4.08% 2
▼ Maybe	10.20% 5
▼ (Currently using child care)	28.57% 14
TOTAL	49

QUESTION 3: WHAT TYPES OF CHILD CARE DO YOUR EMPLOYEES USE?

Employers indicated 123 responses to the types of care utilized by their employees. 57% of working parents are using licensed child care settings; 43% are using un-licensed child care settings:

TYPE OF CARE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Family Child Care	40	33%
Child Care Center	29	24%
Total Licensed Child Care	69	57%

Table 1: Licensed Child Care Options used by Worthington Employees.

TYPE OF CARE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Family, Friend, Neighbor Care	30	24%
Legal Non-licensed Care	14	11%
Public School Based Care	10	8%
Total Unlicensed Child Care	54	43%

Table 2: Unlicensed Child Care Options used by Worthington Employees.

TYPE OF CARE DEFINITIONS:

Family Child Care: This type of care licenses an individual to care for up to 12 children in a residential setting (primarily the caregiver’s home). If there are two adult caregivers, the setting can provide care for up to 14 children. This type of license is issued by the county. A “Special Family Child Care License” allows a non-profit, church, or business to license a space and operate it under the Family Child Care License. The MN statute regulating this type of care is called “Rule 2” (MN Rules Chapter 9502).

Infant: Ages 6 weeks - 12 months	Toddler: Ages 12 months – 24 months
Preschooler: Ages 24 months – 5 years	School Age: Ages 5-11 years

Child Care Center: This type of care licenses a facility to care for groups of children by age. Each age group is required to maintain a child/staff ratio.

Infants: Ages 0-16 months; 1 teacher qualified staff person for every 4 infants
Toddler: Ages 16-33 months; 1 teacher qualified staff person for every 7 toddlers
Preschooler: Ages 33 months – Kindergarten; 1 teacher qualified staff person for every 10 preschoolers
School Age: Kindergarten - 12 years; 1 teacher qualified staff person for every 15 school agers

This type of license is issued by the State of MN Department of Human Services. The MN statute regulating this type of care is called “Rule 3” (MN Rules Chapter 9503).

Family Friend & Neighbor Care: This type of care is not regulated. There is no limit on the number of related children one individual can care for.

Legal Non-Licensed Care: In Minnesota, an individual can care for one un-related family without becoming licensed. If the family is using Child Care Assistance to help care for child care, the caregiver must be “registered” with the local human service agency.

Public School-Based Care: DHS is responsible for certifying and monitoring license-exempt child care centers that participate in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for compliance with certification requirements. A license-exempt center that does not participate in CCAP does not need to be certified.

**QUESTION 4: DO YOUR EMPLOYEES COMMUTE TO WORK?
QUESTION 5: FROM WHICH COMMUNITY?**

39 employers responded with 77 employees commuting to Worthington from 20 communities:

Adrian	9	11.69%
Brewster	9	11.69%
Fulda	9	11.69%
Iowa	9	11.69%
Rushmore	9	11.69%
Windom	6	7.79%
Slayton	5	6.49%
Round Lake	4	5.19%
Wilmont	3	3.90%
Heron Lake	2	2.60%
Lakefield	2	2.60%
SD Sioux Falls	2	2.60%
Bigelow	1	1.30%
Bingham Lake	1	1.30%
Edgerton	1	1.30%
Jackson	1	1.30%
Mountain Lake	1	1.30%
Pipestone	1	1.30%
Sioux Valley	1	1.30%
Tyler	1	1.30%
Total	77	100.02%

Table 3: Communities Employees Travel From to Work in Worthington

**QUESTION 6: WHICH COMMUNITY DO YOUR EMPLOYEES USE FOR CHILD CARE?
QUESTION 7: HOW DIFFICULT IS IT FOR THESE EMPLOYEES TO FIND CHILD CARE?**

35 employees were identified as using child care in Worthington. Difficulty of their child care experiences is as follows:

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very Difficult	21	60%
Difficult	10	28.57%
Employer not aware of employee's child care problems	2	5.71%
Employees have declined positions because of child care difficulties	1	2.86%
Employees have quit working because of child care difficulties	1	2.86%
Total	35	100%

Table 4: Employees Difficulty With Child Care in Worthington

“Had one employee that had to quit because she lost her child care and could not find another.” - Survey Respondent

QUESTION 8: WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION WILLING TO DO TO SUPPORT QUALITY CHILD CARE AVAILABLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

33 employers responded as follows:

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Provide free space to host child care trainings and events	10	30.3%
Attend a meeting to learn more about child care engagement	9	27.27%
Support the startup of new family child care providers through forgivable loans	5	15.15%
Provide an employer sponsored family child care setting	2	6.06%
Provide funding to increase spaces in a child care center	1	3.03%
Provide incentives to child care providers and programs attaining a Parent Aware Quality Rating	1	3.03%
Provide supplies and resources to current child care programs	1	3.03%
Hopefully be part of the solution...the YMCA is the largest child care provider across country.	1	3.03%
Flexible on employee schedules when they have issues with child care	1	3.03%
Not sure / Unknown	2	6.06%
	33	100%

Table 5: Employers Support for Quality Child Care in Worthington

“How about more than one option? This situation will need flexibility and creativity!” – Survey Respondent

** Note – only 10 of the 50 employers responding to the survey identified their name and contact information, making follow-up with employers on potential solutions listed on this question difficult.

QUESTION 9: BASED ON YOUR EMPLOYEES EXPERIENCE, WHAT CHILD CARE AREAS ARE NEEDED?

32 employers with employees using child care in Worthington responded with the following needs:

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Toddler	28	21.37%
Full-time	27	20.61%
Part-time	16	12.21%
Before and After School Care for School-age Children	16	12.21%
Drop-in Care	15	11.45%
Summer Care for School-age Children	11	8.4%
Educational Focused Care	10	7.63%
Evening or Overnight Care	5	3.82%
Other	3	2.29%
Total	131	100%

Table 6: Child Care Needs in Worthington

“early mornings are needed (at 5:30-6) and some evenings” – Survey Respondent

QUESTION 10: WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR(S) AFFECTING YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CHILD CARE IN WORTHINGTON?

This was an open-ended question. The responses were categorized into 4 areas: Infrastructure; Capital; Regulations; and Miscellaneous. *All comments are listed as originally submitted in the survey.*

Infrastructure:

Affordable care.
Availability
Availability and options of child care
Employees are having a hard time finding Daycare.
employees being able to work
Finding Qualified Teachers to meet the State requirements.
Flexible hours at local daycare providers
Giving moms a place to feel safe and comfortable care spot for kids so moms can have piece of mind to go to work.
I lack the ability to recruit talent to my organization when applicants have children and can't find childcare.
Keeping employees
Many day cares close shortly after 5 pm, making it hard for parents to get there on time after working until 5:00
Providing quality, affordable child care. Especially for infants. We have primarily female staff and a large portion are starting families and are concerned they will have to quit their jobs because they cannot find child care.
Since there is struggle, people are resorting to quit work and be at home while the other spouse works
Too many kids not being watched or being watched by someone too young to be responsible.
We can't get the good applicants because they can't find childcare.

Capital:

Capital Cost, also enough funding to fund operations, and so many could and would qualify for subsidies and there currently is not enough. wages that can and will attract and retrain quality staff. additionally, the odwer age groups are needed in the center to help off set cost from younger infants and toddlers. Those ages could go away unless school districts contract with Centers to provide preschool program. Infant and toddler can NOT support and operation on its own.
Cost
Cost
Cost and space
Funding
Funds
limited finances
Profits
We are a small company that does not have the resources to build/support the expansion of child care; the lack of child care makes it hard for our company to retain skilled, qualified employees.

Regulations:

We definitely agree the need is there, however, we are not experts in the field. The appropriate space with professional, knowledgeable staff is most important to us.
Licensing process, funding, and navigating multiple uses of our church space for day-care.

Miscellaneous:

At this time, none
I don't know
Never been brought up
Not sure what you are asking here.
This question does not make sense! What are you asking!

QUESTION 11: WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON CHILD CARE PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED BY YOUR EMPLOYEES?

QUESTION 12: WHAT CAN BE DONE IN THE CITY OF WORTHINGTON TO ENSURE ITS YOUNGEST CITIZENS ARE WELL CARED FOR AND PARENTS CAN FIND/MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

These were open-ended questions, with similar responses, so the answers were combined. I categorized the responses into 4 areas: Infrastructure; Capital; Regulations; and Type of Care. *All comments are listed as originally submitted in the survey.*

Infrastructure:

A building for large based child care, managed by a licensed organization or group.
all entities need to come together to address the issue having children cared for in our community is a win-win situation for families and employers
Anything that would help in getting child care for the employees would be helpful
Availability
Build more daycare
Depending on the age of the child, many employees must be wait listed with a daycare or have to utilize family/friends for coverage.

Infrastructure: (continued)

Encourage Swift, Bedford and District 518 (large employers) to create daycare facilities for their employees which will then open up smaller licensed daycare spots for smaller employers staff.
Explore permanent solutions to ongoing day care problems
Finding child care.
Had one employee that had to quit because she lost her child care and could not find another
Help the people that want to open daycares.
I think it is so sad that some of the lowest paid workers in our community are caring for our children. We need to increase their wages, and I think we would attract more quality child care providers who have more education and experience.
Less and less daycare providers, daycare providers in business have stricter policies and shorter hours
more daycares
More facilities that are better managed
Most places are full or don't have openings for the age group needed
need to develop an approach for options of child care and the City can provide the leadership and facilitation of discussions.
No daycares available
No openings
No openings - not enough daycare facilities, and affordability.
not enough
Not enough daycares or spaces within daycares
Not enough spaces available for children under school age.
One employee would like to move to Worthington, but would need to find childcare for her son with autism, another employee uses daycare and they are so particular with full time that it makes it hard for her to be flexible with them.
Provide more infant care facilities
Some of my staff use friends, family, or older kids.
The community could offer an employer-sponsored center and provide additional funding and support to existing providers.
There are no daycare's with openings!
They had no openings.
Training for child care workers and training for opening child care services.
We need indoor play areas for Toddlers (like some malls have)
Work on a variety of solutions, not just one for this situation! For all ages of child care!
You need to support existing programs. If the child care centers are not able to find Teacher or Asst. Teacher staff in their current program, how will any new ones find them?

Capital:

City funded assistance
Help fund Programs that are Star Rated.
Provide financial assistance/incentives for new day care providers or facilities willing to include infants in their care.
Provide locations and incentives for child care providers.
reduce regulations, may have to find a way to subsidize child care
support for those getting started in the child care business to help make it possible
Support the issue/funding/grants

Type of Care:

a preschool based center from infants-kindergarten age
before or after school care should run even if school is closed, closed early or late start, parents can't rely on this if they have to find other options when the weather affects if this program is available or not. Also the program would be more successful if it was open during the summer
Community day care??
hours available can limit and guide choices
I believe this can be a good business option for new businesses to open in the community. People should be able to pay their own start up costs. Community education in starting this type of business should promote interest in the business of in home day care providers as a business opportunity.
I just had an employee quit as the daycare raised her rates and she could no longer afford daycare and she has no other choices because there is such a shortage of childcare.
In the future I know I will need child care and I know we are struggling with needing evening hour care. We are planning to hire a part time nanny though this will cost us a good amount.
It must also be safe.
More childcare options that are state registered!
more daycare options and ones that actually have structure/developmental programming for toddlers (vs. just play time)
more quality licensed care
Real professional setting
Very difficult, especially for Infant Child Care in Worthington and surrounding communities.
We need more child care providers. The lack of providers is a huge concern.

Regulations:

City could help get the word out to the legislature that the rules/regulations being placed on licensed daycares are becoming impossible to achieve, thus causing long standing, reliable daycares to close creating the shortage of good daycares in the area.
Transportation for preschool would be very HELPFUL to working parents.
Way to regulated

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Overwhelming, availability and capacity were the biggest issues raised. There is a “goodness of fit” for each child and family. Families should have options to choose from – not feel they have to take the only child care opening they can find.
- Each type of care has importance in meeting the child care needs of employees with young children; and they all need to be supported. The wide variety of employee needs cannot possibly be met with only one type of child care. There is a role for each type of care and each deserves expansion and retention: family child care, child care center, part-time, full-time, family friend & neighbor, legally unlicensed, and community programs. A high percentage of families are using unlicensed care, which may have little to no health and safety standards or oversight in place.
- The “Special Family Child Care License” opens the door for businesses and organizations to impact the availability of child care at a lower cost with faster results than a Rule 3 / state-licensed child care center.
- There is no denying that child care impacts economic development, but child care is also an industry that needs to be supported. Brain development begins at birth. The quality of care a child receives impacts their development. I caution you to avoid focusing on simply “creating child care spaces”. For the community and the industry to thrive, attention needs to be paid on the development of quality. Child care is a physically, mentally demanding job which deserves respect and support.
- The cost of care was an issue raised frequently. There are programs in place that assist income eligible families to help pay the cost of child care.
 - Child Care Assistance is available to income eligible families and can be used at a variety programs: family child care, child care centers, license-exempt child care centers, preschool programs, and legally non-licensed care.
 - Early Learning Scholarships are available to income eligible families who have their children enrolled in Parent Aware Quality Rated Programs. Families can access: \$3,000 per child per year if they choose a program in a current rating cohort; \$4,000 per child per year if they choose a program with a 1 or 2-Star rating; \$5,000 per child per year if they choose a program with a 3-Star rating; and \$7,500 per child per year if they choose a program with a 4-Star rating. These scholarships can make the difference in a family with multiple children under the age of 5 being able to remain in the workforce. As more child care programs attain their Parent Aware Quality Rating, the options available to families will continue to expand.
- Capacity in a licensed child care center is directly related to the availability of teacher qualified staff. To keep rates affordable for families, child care center staff do not earn the salary they deserve as they nurture our youngest citizens growth and development. Without additional resources put toward building full-day, full-time, full-year child care capacity, Worthington will continue to struggle with declining child care numbers. It will be difficult to attract new people to the child care field if they cannot make a living. The list of options given in Question 8 is a great place to start these conversations.

Respectfully,
Karen DeBoer, Director
Region 8 Child Care Aware