

# Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care in Pottawatomie County, Kansas

by

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## **Background**

This effort began in October 2015 when the Pottawatomie County (Pott. Co.) Economic Development Corporation held a meeting of Pott. Co. stakeholders and identified the following goal for child care: “The development of new and creative programs to enhance the availability and affordability of day care for children from birth to five years.” The Pottawatomie County Child Care Task Force (PCCCTF) was then formed and chaired by Erin Tynon, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent in Pott. Co. The first meeting of the task force was in May of 2016. As the task force began to discuss what needed to happen to meet the goal, the newly minted K-State Research and Extension Applied Research in Child Health and Enhancing Resilience (ARCHER) Lab was asked to spearhead the development of the needs assessment measures, analysis and reporting of the results. Bradford Wiles, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in Early Childhood Development, began to identify potential measures.

Development of measures was accomplished through a Community-Based Participatory Research approach. The measures were developed with the support and valuable insight of Daryn Soldan at the Wamego Chamber of Commerce; Jack Alston and Jessica Venneberg of the Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation; Mary Altenhofen, KDHE Child Care Surveyor; the Boys and Girls Clubs after and before school programs; two Pott. Co. child care center owners and directors, Jenni Ebert and Heather Melton; the Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities field professional, Cristin Hargitt; Laurie Piper at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC); and others. While everyone contributed, considerable support from Erin, Jack, Daryn, and Jessica (all mentioned above) enabled this project to move forward successfully.

## Methods

From established measures that Dr. Wiles had researched, identified, and provided for selection and adaptation, the group designed surveys and focus group questions. Measures were compiled for five different audiences: 1) adults with children in child care, 2) adults seeking child care, 3) child care professionals, 4) human resource professionals, and 5) general public. Due to similarity of responses between human resource professionals and the general public, these two groups were combined and analyzed as one category, referred to as general public in this report. Measures were determined over the course of two face to face meetings lasting more than two hours each. Further, multiple email exchanges, including among the broader multi-state team, finally honed the finished products.

This research project was reviewed and approved by Kansas State University IRB.

### Surveys

After running a power analysis based on the estimated population and our surveys, Dr. Wiles provided an estimate of the number of participants in each group to satisfy an ability to infer representation of the target population. He then created surveys in Qualtrics, alpha tested them and beta tested them. Recruitment cards with information and a QR code were distributed. The surveys went live on August 1, 2017. Jack, Erin, and Jessica also placed advertisements on Facebook and in four newspapers: the *Smoke Signal*, *Onaga Herald*, *Westy Official Weekly* and the *St. Mary's Star*. Jessica also persuaded the Onaga Hospital to send the cards out to all of their employees. Moreover, all of the PCCTF members contributed to survey creation and distribution efforts, which contributed to a high survey response rate.

### Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted with a subset of respondents from each group. The focus groups began on November 20, 2017 with a target of conducting at least two data collection sessions for each group, resulting in a total of 10 focus groups with 6-10 people in each (60-100 people total). Each focus group was audio recorded, transcribed verbatim into a Word document, and qualitatively coded by undergraduate and graduate researchers using a constant comparative method. Questions for each focus group are provided in Appendix A.

## Survey Results

### Adults Seeking Child Care

A total of 10 cases were removed due to invalid responses or lack of completion of relevant portions of the survey. The resulting sample for adults seeking child care was 65. The typical respondent was highly educated (Bachelor degree), White/Caucasian (98.5%), non-Hispanic (98.5%), female (95.4%), 28-32 years of age. Most of the sample (84.6%) indicated working as a paid employee. Median household size was three, and median household income was \$60,000-\$69,999. Additional demographic information and quantitative results are provided below.

Living in Pottawatomie County:  $n = 56$  (86.2%)

Other counties of residence represented:

County	Frequency
Riley	4
Nemaha	2
Geary	1
Marshall	1
Wabaunsee	1

Number of Townships Represented: 13

Townships with Multiple Respondents

Township	Frequency
Wamego	18
St. George	8
Blue	7
Pottawatomie	4
Louisville	3
Mill Creek	3
Blue Valley	2

Ages of Children

Age	Frequency
0-11 months	26
12-18 months	11
19 months to 4 years	21
5 – 8 years	23
9 – 12 years	13
13 – 15 years	0
16 – 18 years	7

Barriers encountered when searching for care (select all that apply)

Type of Barrier	Frequency	Percent of sample
Cost/affordability of childcare	35	53.8
Scheduling child(ren) care to match work schedule	23	35.4
Location of care	22	33.8
Quality of care	21	32.3
Finding temporary care	19	29.2
Dependability of care	16	24.6
Travel time to/from care facility	14	21.5
Finding care for sick child(ren)	9	13.8
Transportation to/from care	8	12.3
Other	4	6.2
Finding care for child(ren) with special needs	3	4.6
Facility accepting DCF child care subsidies	3	4.6
Finding care for children with dietary/allergy restrictions	2	3.1
Statistics		
Mean		2.75
Standard Deviation		2.31
Median		3
Selected at least one barrier		78.5%

Childcare preferences (select all that apply)

Type of childcare arrangement	Frequency	Percent of sample
Childcare center	29	44.6
Childcare by me in our own home	22	33.8
Combination of care as needed	22	33.8
School-based program	20	30.8
Care in own home with relative	19	29.2
Care by spouse / other partner in our own home	18	27.7
Care in relative's home	16	24.6
Care in non-relative's home	12	18.5
Care in your home with non-relative	10	15.4
Other	1	1.5

Days/times you need childcare (children ages 0-5)

Day or time requiring childcare	Frequency
Monday-Friday	44
Snow days, holidays, summer breaks	13
Evening/nights (2 <sup>nd</sup> shift)	5
Early morning (graveyard shift)	5
Other	5

Days/times you need childcare (school-age children)

Day or time requiring childcare	Frequency
After school only	15
In-service/professional development days	11
Natural school breaks (e.g., spring, winter)	8
Other	8
Before and after school	7
Emergency school closings	3
Before school only	1

Perceptions of reasonable pricing according to child age and type of facility  
(per week/per child during the regularly school year)

Amount	Childcare Center	Home-Based Facility
Infant (0-12 mos.)		
No pay required	0	0
Less than \$100	7	14
\$100-\$150	20	17
\$151-\$200	6	6
\$201-\$250	7	4
\$251-\$300	1	1
Over \$300	0	0
Toddler (13-24 mos.)		
No pay required	2	0
Less than \$100	9	16
\$100-\$150	20	16
\$151-\$200	6	4
\$201-\$250	2	2
\$251-\$300	0	0
Over \$300	0	0
Preschool (>24 mos.)		
No pay required	2	2
Less than \$100	18	24
\$100-\$150	15	9
\$151-\$200	3	3
\$201-\$250	0	0
\$251-\$300	0	0
Over \$300	0	0

### Importance of various factors in finding child care

Rank	Factor	Mean (SD)	Median	Mode	Min	Max
1	Cost	2.57 (1.79)	2	1	1	9
2	Provider is someone you know and trust	4.24 (4.06)	3	1	1	17
3	Provider offers stimulating activities or programs	5.10 (2.86)	4	4	1	13
4	Provider's discipline and guidance styles match yours	5.51 (2.66)	6	6	1	14
5	Provider emphasizes school academics (e.g., reading and math skills)	7.27 (3.23)	7	8	1	17
6	Provider has a reputation for good care	7.37 (4.07)	7	11	1	18
7	Provider emphasizes creativity in art, music, theater and pretend play	8.67 (3.04)	8	8	1	18
8	Race, ethnicity or language of the provider matches yours	10.47 (5.39)	8	7	2	23
9	Provider was recommended by a family member or friend	10.96 (3.52)	11	10	4	19
10	Provider accepts infants	11.84 (6.28)	14	14	1	22

At the end of the survey participants were invited to respond to the following prompt, "Is there anything regarding child care in your community that you wished we had asked, or you would like to tell us?" The following statements were provided:

- I have an infant and a school aged child and it is almost impossible to find somewhere for both of them to go. The infant I need all day and school age I need summer after school and school days off. Sometimes I feel like I'm tossing money out the window and always scrambling to find someone to watch my kids.
- There are NO daycares, after school programs in olsburg. Everything in Randolph is also full. There is no where for working parents to take kids on no school days.
- More affordable child care and more preschool options that are affordable.
- There is a lack of availability of childcare that doesn't seem to be addressed here. There are more children in need of childcare than there are spots available. It's absurd to call childcare centers or home centers and be told that your child can be put on a 2-3 year waiting list.
- I know two amazing people that were trying and are still trying to open a child care center in the st george/hwy 24/ Flush Rd. area but they tried to get a loan to build and couldn't. So they got a smaller loan and opened a home daycare in Westmoreland
- your question regarding reason for after school care does not allow multiple selections. I would have chose: after school, inservice, no school, summer, etc.
- We need more options on the East side of town. Having to drive 15 minutes for the nearest center is a long drive for the size Manhattan is growing towards. With Crèche just opening that is better but one facility will not help to alleviate the needs. Not personally an issue, but I know of families that have both parents in the military that need better care hours. There are no facilities

that cater to their needs off-base. The particular family I know of needs care from 5:30am to 6pm. Most places close by 5:30pm and don't open until 7/7:30am

- Need 2nd shift child care, which is nearly impossible to find.
- Onaga needs more in-home daycare providers and a daycare center
- Many "child care" providers are not registered yet provide care in-home. Is there a requirement that anyone with childcare delivery must be on a public list and be evaluated annually for the setting and methods of care?
- Onaga simply doesn't have any options available.
- All of those characteristics that were listed were important; there was no way I could have listed my top 5; maybe my top 10 but there are a lot of important factors when leaving your child with someone else

### **Adults with Children in Child Care**

The sample for adults with children in child care was 138. The typical respondent held an Associate degree, was White/Caucasian (98.6%), non-Hispanic (97.8%), female (87.7%), and 33-37 years of age. Most of the sample (87.7%) indicated working as a paid employee. Median household size was four, and median household income was \$90,000-\$99,999. Additional demographic information and quantitative results are provided below.

Living in Pottawatomie County:  $n = 126$  (91.3%)

Other counties of residence represented:

County	Frequency
Riley	5
Nemaha	2
Marshall	2
Wabaunsee	2
Geary	1

Number of townships represented: 15

Townships with multiple respondents

Township	Frequency
Wamego	49
St. George	21
Blue	10
Pottawatomie	6
Louisville	5
Mill Creek	3
Blue Valley	4
Belvue	2
Emmett	2
St. Mary's	2
Union	4

Ages of Children

Age	Frequency
0-11 months	39
12-18 months	24
19 months to 4 years	86 (with 1), 17 (with 2)
5 – 8 years	52(with 1), 10 (with 2), 1 (with 3)
9 – 12 years	16 (with 1), 5 (with 2)
13 – 15 years	2 (with 1), 1 (with 2)
16 – 18 years	7

Barriers encountered when searching for care (select all that apply)

Type of barrier	Frequency	Percent of sample
Cost/affordability of childcare	96	69.6
Quality of care	88	63.8
Location of care	84	60.9
Dependability of care	82	59.4
Travel time to/from care facility	53	38.4
Scheduling child(ren) care to match work schedule	52	37.7
Finding care for sick child(ren)	44	31.8
Finding temporary care	35	25.4
Transportation to/from care	28	20.3
Other	13	9.4
Finding care for children with dietary/allergy restrictions	6	4.3
Finding care for child(ren) with special needs	5	3.6
Facility accepting DCF child care subsidies	5	3.6
Statistics		
Mean		4.28
Median		4
Selection of at least one barrier		96.4%

Estimate of number of waitlists they were on before securing childcare

Statistic	Result
Mean	1.77
Standard Deviation	1.65
Median	2
Minimum	0
Maximum	10

Missing  $n = 9$

Childcare preferences (select all that apply)

Type of childcare arrangement	Frequency	Percent of sample
Childcare center	86	62.3
School-based program	62	44.9
Childcare by me in our own home	58	42.0
Care in non-relative's home	44	31.9
Combination of care as needed	43	31.2
Care by spouse / other partner in our own home	35	25.4
Care in own home with relative	33	23.9
Care in relative's home	30	21.7
Care in your home with non-relative	19	13.8
Other	0	0

Type of Current Child Care

Type of childcare arrangement	Frequency	Percent of sample
Care in non-relative's home	63	45.7
Childcare center	57	41.3
School-based program	20	14.5
Childcare by me in our own home	14	10.1
Combination of care as needed	11	8.0
Care in relative's home	8	5.8
Care in your home with non-relative	7	5.1
Care by spouse / other partner in our own home	4	2.9
Care in own home with relative	4	2.9
Other	0	0

Days/times you need childcare (children ages 0-5)

Day or time requiring childcare	Frequency
Monday-Friday	131
Snow days, holidays, summer breaks	48
Evening/nights (2 <sup>nd</sup> shift)	5
Early morning (graveyard shift)	5
Other	4

Days/times you need childcare (school-age children)

Day or time requiring childcare	Frequency
Before and after school	35
After school only	31
Other	21
In-service/professional development days	16
Natural school breaks (e.g., spring, winter)	13
Emergency school closings	8
Before school only	2

Perceptions of reasonable fees for childcare according to child age and type of facility  
(per week/per child during the regular school year)

Amount	Childcare Center	Home-Based Facility
Infant (0-12 mos.)		
No pay required	0	2
Less than \$100	4	10
\$100-\$150	65	70
\$151-\$200	28	22
\$201-\$250	10	4
\$251-\$300	4	0
Over \$300	0	1
Missing	27	29
Toddler (13-24 mos.)		
No pay required	0	2
Less than \$100	9	22
\$100-\$150	77	77
\$151-\$200	18	8
\$201-\$250	3	2
\$251-\$300	4	0
Over \$300	0	1
Missing	27	26
Preschool (>24 mos.)		
No pay required	1	2
Less than \$100	39	41
\$100-\$150	63	72
\$151-\$200	12	4
\$201-\$250	5	3
\$251-\$300	1	0
Over \$300	0	1
Missing	17	15

Amount	Childcare Center	Home-Based Facility
Infant (0-12 mos.)		
No pay required	3	4
Less than \$100	1	5
\$100-\$150	7	33
\$151-\$200	8	9
\$201-\$250	4	2
\$251-\$300	0	0
Over \$300	0	0
Toddler (13-24 mos.)		
No pay required	4	2
Less than \$100	2	4
\$100-\$150	10	35
\$151-\$200	8	5
\$201-\$250	4	5
\$251-\$300	2	1
Over \$300	0	0
Preschool (>24 mos.)		
No pay required	0	4
Less than \$100	6	7
\$100-\$150	17	36
\$151-\$200	19	2
\$201-\$250	4	2
\$251-\$300	0	1
Over \$300	0	1

Amount you currently pay for child care, according to child age and type of facility (per week/per child during the regular school year)

#### Ranked importance of various factors in finding child care

Rank	Factor	Mean (SD)	Median	Mode	Min	Max
1	Cost	3.59 (2.62)	3	1	1	14
2	Provider is someone you know and trust	4.33 (3.52)	3	1	1	15
3	Provider offers stimulating activities or programs	5.5 (2.81)	5	3	1	13
4	Provider's discipline and guidance styles match yours	5.98 (2.87)	6	7	1	17
5	Provider had a reputation for good care	5.99 (3.93)	5	2	1	13
6	Provider emphasizes school academics (e.g., reading and math skills)	7.08 (3.18)	7	8	1	18
7	Provider emphasizes creativity in art, music, theater and pretend play	8.61 (2.85)	9	9	1	17
8	Race, ethnicity or language of the provider matches yours	9.73 (4.36)	8	6	3	23
9	Provider was recommended by a family member or friend	10.46 (3.53)	11	12	1	18
10	Provider accepts subsidy payments	11.16 (3.24)	10	10	4	23

Missing:  $n = 6$  for all items

The following responses were provided for the prompt, “Is there anything regarding child care in your community that you wished we had asked, or you would like to tell us?”:

- Have more center based options. With wamego only having two centers it is very hard to get my child into one.
- Impossible to find any daycare in onaga, ks.
- Make it more flexible for working parent(s). Unfortunately, we cannot take off for everyday that school is out. The drop off times in the morning are too hard for parents that have a schedule where they cannot come in late.
- Need to be more options for daycare in small but growing communities, that are also affordable, educational and with caring staff.
- I ranked "the provider is someone you know and trust" as #1, but I mainly am concerned about trust. I either would like to know somebody who has taken their kids there or know that the provider has a good reputation. I also think it would be excellent if there were a day care center near St. George.
- Most child care businesses are either In-Home (which I have had problems with every one that I have tried) or they are a daycare facility that has inconsistent staffing, excessive paid days off (that aren't holidays), and inconsistent discipline/care methods. Also, the only after school school-age program in Wamego is Boys and Girls Club that does not have a designated location in Wamego other than using Central Elementary's facility. Boys and Girls Club does provide a program in the Summer, however, in 2017 they were closed in Wamego from May 22nd and reopened in Wamego on May 30th. Then the last day of the Summer program in Wamego was July 28th; you could take your children to the Manhattan location if you needed continued care. There is no other source of childcare for school-age children in Wamego from the Last day of school in May until Boys and Girls Club starts the summer program in June and then they close around the Last day of July and you don't have care until the children begin school again. No childcare from July 31st through August 15th; 12 business days. It would be wonderful if Wamego had a set location for Boys and Girls Club or had an alternative childcare program and facility for school-age children after school and during the Summer.
- There just needs to be more options.
- I'm not sure this is the right survey for me, im looking for a preschool type childcare that are not offered in our area except for a select few at the elementary school.
- We need more options, and maybe those who want to can get help starting up
- More faith based preschools with full day programs to accommodate commuting parents
- The number of centers available is incredibly low for for this size of an area. Also, the rates compared to Wichita are extremely high.
- Need more daycare options. Especially child care facilities at places of employment or schools.

- I feel like Pottawatomie County (Wamego that I know of for sure) has several quality providers! Our son goes to Little Love Bugs in Wamego, and we could not ask for a better learning experience for our son. We know he is safe, happy, and always engaged in positive environment! Very blessed.
- No. I do have daycare currently but recently switched due to some health care issues with my initial daycare provider. Now my new provider is having some health issues; there is really no dependable daycare around here; I fear that both of them could be quitting soon and there is absolutely NO daycare otherwise in the area that would have an opening. I frequently have to try and piece together family /friends that can take my 2 year old and that is stressful. I also am expecting and am due in February so I have been very stressed about child care as I have to work; my husband is a teacher and he does not make enough income on his own. It would be awesome to have something dependable and affordable because I don't know what I will do if my new provider quits.
- Need more daycare centers for early morning drop offs before school and also more centers for after school.
- Included a place for working and going to school. I actually work full-time and go to school full-time and it was a NIGHTMARE trying to find someone that was open late enough to accommodate my schedule. Trying to find a provider past 5:30 was almost impossible. Another question may be how many hours does your child attend care a week, I feel horrible for saying this by my child is there around 60 hours a week and finding one care provider that is open that many hours was very hard. I was amazed there were not any child care centers open in my area that had extended hours. I moved here from a place that has 24 hr child care centers and they were not outrageously priced like the ones here. I think it was like \$700 a month for around 65 hours because I went to school and worked 3 jobs. Another thing that was quite surprising is that most of the care facilities have the same schedule as our schools so, for instance, the week after Christmas the schools are closed and the daycares are closed? How does that even make sense? So at least one parent must take the time off of work or a single parent family must take that time off of work. Most employers have already had so many requests to take that time off they are blacked out to the people with the most seniority or that requested it first. And you have to pay them for that week that they take off and some people don't have vacation time so they aren't even getting paid for the time they have to take off, like for instance at my job I get one hour of PTO for every week I work full-time- If I do not meet the full-time hours I will not get that hour. So I have to work 40 weeks and pray my request gets accepted to take that time off or I could lose my job by calling in for a week. This allows me for 11 hours of sick time for me and my daughter for the whole rest of the year. This doesn't cover the other In-Service days or the spring vacation etc. I feel like these policies make it very hard for anyone to have a single wor
- Daycare at place of employment
- Wamego needs childcare that recognizes both parents work and provides availability that facilitates drop off and pick up. We were on a waitlist for 18 months before securing an opening with someone we trusted. Wamego also needs before school care that starts at 7:00am for commuting parents.
- It wasn't an option on the "hurdle" question, but our biggest issue when moving here was finding a center that had openings for infants. We had to wait two months to get him into a center.

- More accredited childcare centers
- I wish I had more info on pre school and facilities in the area. It is extremely hard to find a daycare in areas, and still get my child to preschool in afternoons
- Not all questions allowed multiple answers as noted. Price is ridiculous in this area. I dont see how people afford it.
- It is very difficult to find child care for an infant. It was very difficult to find care for my first child when he was an infant. With my second child we already had a relationship with a provider and they were able to accept the new baby as well.
- The Facebook group for "licensed daycare facilities in Manhattan" was the most useful tool I found when seeking childcare as a first time mom. I attempted to access online listings from local resources (can't remember what those website were) but the listings were not complete or accurate. They didn't include full contact information and it was impossible to know if any of the listings had websites or other online examples of their facilities. A better online resource is greatly needed to provide families with listings of available childcare in their area.
- There needs to be more options around the St. George Elementary school where a bus can pick up and drop off children before and after school. Also, somewhere that would take them on non school days but would also accept younger preschool children and infants. But it needs to have an educational value behind it. I don't think my kid needs to be reading before kindergarten or anything but something that is good for the brain growth. The increasing population in this area is going to drive up cost.
- I would like to see more daycares open until 6 at night to offer a little more flexibility for parents.
- I feel like quality daycare in this area as well as Manhattan is very expensive. I don't know how so many parents can afford to take their children to the area centers, and keep the centers full. We are not super pleased with our current daycare, and have been keeping our eye out for another.
- It would be helpful if childcare providers/centers would be open until at least 6 p.m. Some evenings it is difficult to have my child picked up by 5:30.
- provider that requires immunizations was important to us We got lucky with our situation mother needs more than 3 months before she returns to work after delivery The state should offer registered daycare providers learning resources and tools
- We just wish we had more options here in Westy for daycare/centers. We would love to have our daughter in a playful learning environment (example: Brilliant Beginings, Little love bugs, Crèche) but they are all on super long waiting lists, and the opposite directions for our jobs.
- I found it very challenging to find child care for two children at the same facility. I also encountered a great deal of challenge because my 3 year old son wasn't fully potty trained and most child care centers stated strongly that he could not attend until he was accident-free. The center where they currently attend (Little Love Bugs) was much more understanding and

accepting to the fact that every kid is different and they don't make a big deal if he has an accident. As a child that just moved from another state, I felt it was within a normal range for child development and I appreciated their compassion that other centers lacked. The other deciding factor was they were the only center with an opening for my 12 month old son at the time.

- How many childcare facilities that offer busing school aged children to their school.
- Lack of child care for working families.
- As a parent of premature, twins with special needs. It was very difficult to leave my children with anyone but family for the 1st 2 years. After which time, we had a family friends assist with watching the children until they were able to attend HeadStart and ECSE for a full day. There is definitely a shortage of child care in this region. Another area of concern in regards of care, would be the lack of adult care for those individuals with visual impairment, autism spectrum disorders, who are very high functioning however need monitoring for safety in a home like setting.
- We use Boys and Girls Club and love it! It offers almost everything we need.
- Safe and dependable child care is an important service in any growing community / county.

### Childcare Professionals

Due low response rate, the survey for childcare professionals was reissued. The reissued survey contained all items from the previous version, plus one item regarding willingness to partner with various types of community organizations. Given the anonymous format of the survey, it is not possible to determine if individuals who completed the original survey participated in the reissued survey. Sample demographics differed between the two surveys, so results are presented separately.

**Sample One.** The first sample of childcare professionals was 28 people. The typical respondent was highly educated (Bachelor degree), White/Caucasian (96.4%), non-Hispanic (96.4%), female (96.4%), 33-37 years of age. Median household size was between three and four; median household income was \$70,000-\$79,999.

Living in Pottawatomie County:  $n = 25$  (89.3%)

Number of townships represented: 7

Townships with multiple respondents

Township	Frequency
Wamego	12
St. George	5
St. Mary's	2
Rock Creek	2

Ages of children living with them

Age	Frequency
0-11 months	2
12-18 months	0
19 months to 4 years	8
5 – 8 years	7 (with 1) 2 (with 2)
9 – 12 years	6
13 – 15 years	6 (with 1) 3 (with 2)
16 – 18 years	4 (with 1) 2 (with 2)

Role within the program

Administrator/Owner	4
Lead Teacher	3
Other	5

Missing  $n = 16$

What kind of program is it?

For profit	6
Not for profit	6

Missing  $n = 12$

What kind of organization sponsors your program? Please select all that apply.

Type	Frequency	Percent
Public School/Board of Education	2	7.1
College or University	2	7.1
Private Company or Individual	2	7.1
Head Start / Early Head Start	1	3.6
Private School, Nonreligious	1	3.6
State or Local Government	1	3.6
Other	1	3.6

Missing:  $n = 18$  (64.3%)

In what type of place is your program located? Please select one.

Type	Frequency	Percent
Independent structure	5	17.9
Public school	3	10.7
Don't know	2	7.1
University or college	1	3.6
Community center or municipal building	1	3.6

Missing:  $n = 16$  (57.1%)

How long has your program been operating at the same location?

Type	Frequency	Percent
More than six months but less than a year	1	3.6
2-3 years	3	10.7
More than five years	8	28.6
Total	12	42.9

Missing:  $n = 16$

How many children are you licensed to care for?

Amount	Frequency	Percent
0	1	3.6
10	2	7.1
19	1	3.6
30	1	3.6
5-10	1	3.6
76	1	3.6
8	1	3.6
Not Applicable	1	3.6

Missing:  $n = 19$

How many children are currently enrolled in your program? *Please include all sessions your program provides for preschool children and before school and after school programs.*

Amount	Frequency	Percent
73	1	3.6
60	1	3.6
17	1	3.6
14	1	3.6
12	1	3.6
8	2	7.1
3	2	7.1
Not applicable	1	3.6

Missing:  $n = 18$

Number of weeks program runs:

Minimum	35
Maximum	52

Missing:  $n = 17$

Drop off times

Earliest	6:30am
Latest	8:00am
Most common	7:30am

Missing:  $n = 18$

Pick up times

Range	Noon to 8:00pm
Most common	5:30pm

Early childhood programs sometimes offer before- and after-school care for school-age children who attend local schools. Do you have a *before*-school program?

Yes	2 (7.1%)
No	9 (32.1%)

Missing:  $n = 17$  (60.7%)

Early childhood programs sometimes offer before- and after-school care for school-age children who attend local schools. Do you have an *after*-school program?

Yes	4 (14.3%)
No	7 (25%)

Missing:  $n = 17$  (60.7%)

Are fees based upon family income?

Yes	4 (14.3%)
No	7 (25%)

Missing:  $n = 17$  (60.7%)

Please provide an estimate of the number of children on your program's waitlist.

Amount	Frequency	Percent
35	1	3.6
30	1	3.6
22	1	3.6
8	1	3.6
4	1	3.6
2	1	3.6
0	3	10.7
Not applicable	1	3.6

Missing:  $n = 18$  (64.3%)

Participants made the following statements in response to, "Is there anything regarding child care in your community that you wished we had asked, or you would like to tell us?":

- Let license daycare increase amount of kids they are able to have.
- I am a Montessori Certified Teacher. I currently am Home Schooling children in their own homes. The families I work for set up a room in their home for our Montessori and or special needs programs for their child(ren). I take my materials from Home to Home to work their children. My goal is to have my own place of Montessori teaching. A home, brick and mortar, or other building, to fulfil this need for children.

- Need more quality facilities

**Sample Two.** Sample two included 25 child care professionals, most of whom reported educational attainment as some college, no degree. Most respondents were White/Caucasian (92%), non-Hispanic (96%), 22-27 years of age. All respondents in sample two were female. Median household size was three, and median household income was \$30,000-\$39,999.

Living in Pottawatomie County:  $n = 20$  (80%)

Number of townships represented: 4

Townships with multiple respondents

Township	Frequency
Wamego	15
Pottawatomie	2

Ages of children living with them

Age	Frequency
0-11 months	1
12-18 months	3
19 months to 4 years	3
5 – 8 years	2 (with 1) 1 (with 2)
9 – 12 years	2
13 – 15 years	2 (with 1) 2 (with 2)
16 – 18 years	1 (with 1) 3 (with 2)

Role within the program

Lead Teacher	7
Other	4
Assistant Teacher	3
Administrator/Owner	2

Missing  $n = 9$

What kind of program is it?

For profit	15
Not for profit	1

Missing  $n = 9$

What kind of organization sponsors your program? Please select all that apply.

Type	Frequency	Percent
Private Company or Individual	7	28.0
Private School, Nonreligious	4	16.0
Other	3	12.0
Public School/Board of Education	1	4.0
Head Start / Early Head Start	1	4.0

Missing:  $n = 9$

In what type of place is your program located? Please select one.

Type	Frequency	Percent
Independent structure	11	44.0
Don't know	2	8.0
Private school	2	8.0
Public school	1	4.0

Missing:  $n = 9$

How long has your program been operating at the same location?

Type	Frequency	Percent
More than six months but less than a year	0	0.0
2-3 years	0	0.0
4-5 years	2	8.0
More than five years	14	56.0

Missing:  $n = 9$

How many children are you licensed to care for?

Amount	Frequency	Percent
38	6	24.0
100	2	8.0
110	2	8.0
96	2	8.0
10	1	4.0
40	1	4.0
75	1	4.0

Missing:  $n = 10$

How many children are currently enrolled in your program? *Please include all sessions your program provides for preschool children and before school and after school programs.*

Amount	Frequency	Percent
38	7	28.0
10	1	4.0
100	1	4.0
125	1	4.0
40	1	4.0
70	1	4.0
85	1	4.0
86	1	4.0
90	1	4.0
96	1	4.0

Missing:  $n = 9$

Number of weeks program runs:

Minimum	40
Maximum	52

Missing:  $n = 9$

Drop off and pick up times:

Earliest drop off time was 6:30am, most common was 7:00am

Pick up times were almost universally 5:30pm.

Early childhood programs sometimes offer before- and after-school care for school-age children who attend local schools. Do you have a *before*-school program?

Yes	3 (12.0%)
No	13 (52.0%)

Missing:  $n = 9$  (36%)

Early childhood programs sometimes offer before- and after-school care for school-age children who attend local schools. Do you have an *after*-school program?

Yes	2 (8.0%)
No	14 (56.0%)

Missing:  $n = 9$  (36.0%)

Are fees based upon family income?

Yes	0 (0.0%)
No	16 (64.0%)

Missing:  $n = 9$  (36.0%)

Please provide an estimate of the number of children on your program’s waitlist.

Amount	Frequency	Percent
10	6	24.0
30	2	8.0
5	2	8.0
15	1	4.0
20	1	4.0
25	1	4.0
50	1	4.0
8	1	4.0

Missing:  $n = 10$  (40.0%)

If a community partner were to approach you regarding expanding your childcare center or daycare, which of the following would you have interest in (check all that apply)?

Type of partnership	Frequency
Expanding your current facility to include more ages or numbers	10
Collaborating with a place of employment to provide care	4
I would not be interested in expanding my childcare center or daycare	3
Collaborating with an older adult care or retirement facility to incorporate intergenerational care	1

Participants provided the following statements in response to the question, “Is there anything regarding child care in your community that you wished we had asked, or you would like to tell us?”:

- I have wanted to expand our center. I would like to add a infant/ toddler building. It has been a need for s long time.
- There is not enough facilities that offer good quality childcare !

### General Public

A total of 5 cases were removed resulting in a sample of 117 for the general public. The typical respondent was highly educated (Bachelor degree), White/Caucasian (97.4%), non-Hispanic (94%), female (93.2%), 52+ years of age. In terms of employment, most (71.8%) were working as paid employees. Median household size was three, and median household income was \$80,000-\$89,999. Below are additional demographic details and quantitative results.

Living in Pottawatomie County:  $n = 107$  (91.5%)

Number of townships represented: 19

Townships with multiple respondents

Township	Frequency
Wamego	33
St. George	22
Shannon	8
Louisville	7
Pottawatomie	6
Blue	4
St. Mary's	4
Rock Creek	3
Sherman	3

Other Counties with multiple respondents: Riley County  $n = 7$

Ages of children living with them

Age	Frequency
0-11 months	8
12-18 months	5
19 months to 4 years	8 (with 1) 4 (with 2) 1 (with 3)
5 – 8 years	20 (with 1) 8 (with 2)
9 – 12 years	18 (with 1) 8 (with 2) 1 (with 3)
13 – 15 years	25 (with 1) 1 (with 3)
16 – 18 years	14 (with 1) 5 (with 2) 1 (with 4)

### Importance of issues for families with young children

Issue	Missing	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Cost/affordability of care	5	0	0	2	10	100
Finding temporary care	8	2	5	12	50	40
Finding care for sick child(ren)	8	3	8	13	38	47
Finding care for children with special needs	6	2	2	11	36	60
Location of care	8	0	1	2	43	63
Transportation to/from care	10	1	5	24	38	39
Dependability of care	6	0	0	0	8	103
Quality of care	7	1	0	0	6	103
Scheduling care to match work schedule	11	0	0	1	25	80
Travel time to/from care facility	11	0	3	10	71	22
Finding care for child(ren) with allergy	11	3	5	24	41	33
Facility accepting DCF child care subsidies	10	5	6	24	42	30
Other	60	1	0	40	10	6

Extent of agreement with statements about childcare

Statement	Missing	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, families in our community have access to an adequate supply of child care services	7	28	34	18	26	4
Access to quality, affordable child care is an economic development issue	7	6	7	14	36	47
Federal and/or state government should make child care services more affordable than they are at present	8	11	11	20	30	37
County government has a role to play in access to quality, affordable child care	8	10	11	21	37	30
Churches have a role to play in access to quality, affordable child care	7	12	13	32	33	20

The following responses were provided for the prompt, “Is there anything regarding child care in your community that you wished we had asked, or you would like to tell us?”:

- Training of teachers and pay.
- The town of Westmoreland does not have a lot of daycare options. There are a couple good quality home daycares....other wise parents are taking their children to Wamego and Manhattan.
- Tax dollars should not be used to subsidize this.
- I live in Wamego, work in Manhattan but day end up being in Manhattan/Riley Co
- availability of financing and land& building availability also an issue impacting affordability.
- Need additional preschools.
- "Large" community have much more access to care, Despite high cost. Small communities have almost NO access to care, even expensive care.
- Would love to see Kansas go to mandatory preschool (at least 4 year old: preK) in all school districts and these services need to be provided at the school the child is zoned for. We do not have enough Preschools in the Pott counties. Since Headstart closed in Wamego, The families of our At Risk students in Pott county have minimal affordable options that provide preschool.
- Childcare for newborns is so expensive, minimum is \$125 per week/ \$500 a month and I have been quoted around \$250 per week in pott county. There needs to be a cap on how much

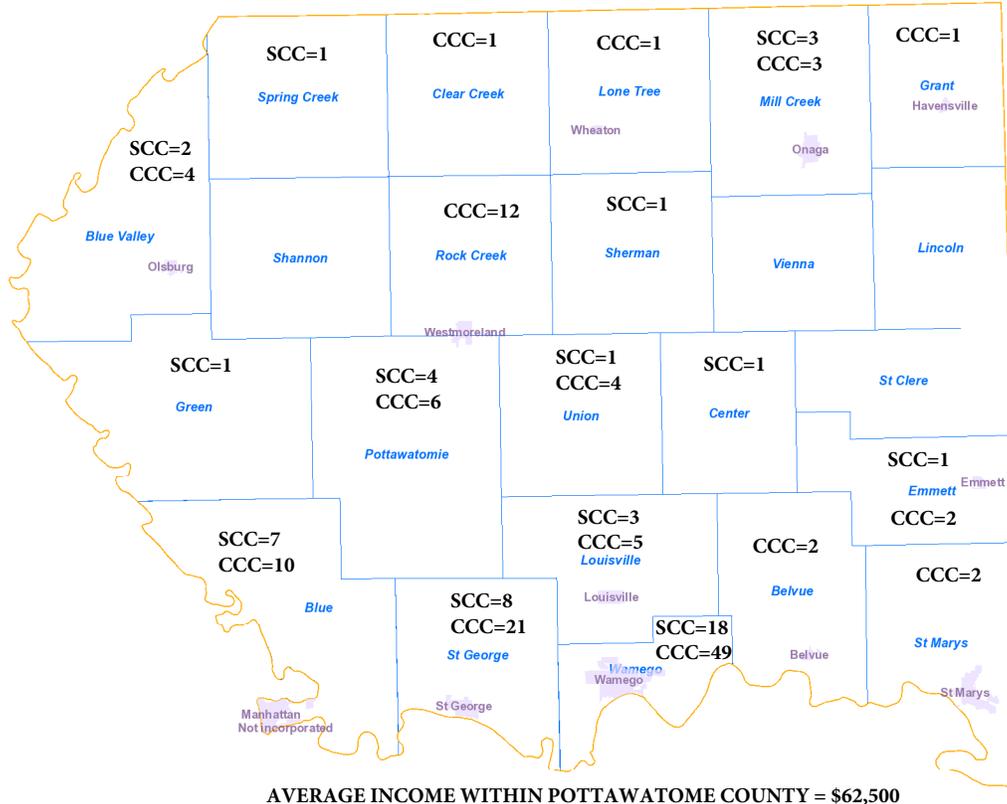
daycares can charge per child. The less expensive daycares rarely have openings, and you have to be on a waitlist for months. Also, your child can't go to daycare for the slightest diareah without a doctors note, fever or not. Children often have fevers with no other symptoms for teething and are sent home. Not only does the parent lose money from missing work, but they still have to pay when their child isn't there. I don't get paid if I'm not at work, why should my provider?

- Affordability is the main key! I have researched care for my grandson and it is off the charts 800+ for full time in a daycare / preschool environment and 500-600 in home add preschool cost and you are back to 800-900. Makes it hard for dual working parents and having to juggle schedules.
- Are you happy with the childcare you are currently using if in Pott county?
- For older children it seems the after school program is one of the only options. And it is the only affordable one!! But it doesn't work for summers, way too pricey, so then you are back to square one. Have not once heard of a facility willing to take on an unwell child-- which would be huge, even if it did require higher fees for the day. As a nurse, I would be fully ok with that. I have considered offering a day care that could be managed that way and treat the kids myself. But there is no way to open a home for that kind of use, so building and rentals are another fee to cover. I am amazed at how many people reach out to strangers online to babysit/daycare for their kids! Complete strangers answer to watch kids. The area is just asking for a problem to arise without inspections and safety out there!
- My kids aren't in child care because of how expensive it is and the lack of care for infants and toddlers
- The community was negatively impacted when the Head Start center in Wamego closed a couple of years ago. Licensure regulations and inspections performed by the county health department need to be more often and with less passes. Quality childcare is important!
- When the state moved away from registered daycares to only licensed daycares, it created a great deal of challenges for small communities. This greatly reduced the number of qualified local people who could watch children on a regular basis. Many didn't want to jump through hoops with the state to watch three kids for a few days a week. Adequate numbers of childcare facilities in small towns is an issue. Cost was not an issue. When you have to plan pregnancies around provider openings, that's an issue.
- There is a huge deficit in help for after-school programs for kids attending in Westmoreland. Most parents work in Manhattan or Wamego, yet there is no busing for kids to any daycare in those towns where parents can pick up. There also isn't a daily after school program for kids to be in until parents can pick them up from work. I teach in St. George and know of good families who have moved their kids out of Westy's school because they need help with after school care and can't get it there

# Pottawatomie Co KS

**SCC = ADULTS SEEKING CHILD CARE**

**CCC = ADULTS WITH CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN CHILD CARE**



**AVERAGE INCOME WITHIN POTTAWATOME COUNTY = \$62,500**

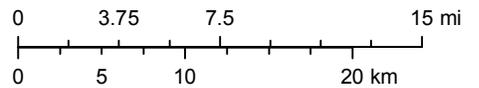
**NUMBER OF ADULTS SEEKING CHILD CARE = 51**

**ADULTS WITH CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN CHILD CARE = 123**

January 25, 2019

1:450,082

- |  |             |  |            |  |              |
|--|-------------|--|------------|--|--------------|
|  | Belvue      |  | Olsburg    |  | Westmoreland |
|  | Emmett      |  | Onaga      |  | Wheaton      |
|  | Havensville |  | St. George |  |              |
|  | Louisville  |  | St. Marys  |  |              |
|  | Manhattan   |  | Wamego     |  |              |



## **Focus Group Findings**

### **Adults Seeking Child Care**

Despite our best efforts, we were not able to recruit a sufficient number of participants to allow us to conduct a focus group among adults seeking child care.

### **Adults with Children in Child Care**

Finding care, especially infant care, in Pott. County is difficult because openings are rare. The entire county needs more options for infant care, preschool, part-time care, various types of facilities, and in various locations. For those with care in Pott. Co. making childcare decisions was stressful and finding care was nerve-racking. They used Child Care Aware, Facebook, and word of mouth, but worried that most people had not heard of CCA or the Facebook page. They utilized friends and acquaintances that had gone through the process to find care, judge care, make childcare decisions. Through this, and after having children, they learned that they must prioritize childcare when planning a pregnancy. They complained that new moms don't know this or any of the nuances of the struggle of finding and affording childcare. Despite advice from others, looking early in the pregnancy and getting on waiting lists didn't help ease the stress of finding childcare. Most were forced to settle with inconvenient care (e.g. care that was in a different town from where they worked or lived), just so they could have it. Some had to make this decision even if their experience was negative. If the experience was positive, and something more convenient came up, they would continue because consistency for their child outweighed the inconvenience. Overall, the experience of the available childcare is a positive one for Pott. Co. adults utilizing care. All participants admitted that having good childcare is important and that their children and family benefit from having it. Good childcare includes, but is not limited to, a loving environment that accepts uniqueness, learning environment with outside play, family-like environment that utilizes open communication, a reliable and stable expert in childcare for their provider, and a consistent place for their child and family should they decide to have more children.

### **Childcare Professionals**

Being a childcare provider in Pott. Co. is rewarding, but also very difficult. Providers enjoy seeing the kids grow up and develop, having helping relationships with families, doing what they love and being able to maintain a strong business. However, the work is demanding. It requires a lot of patience, is exhausting with everything it requires, means long hours, no time for self-care, low pay, a struggle to find time off, it is lonely, and it comes with no employee benefits. Additional struggles include dealing with challenging children and parents, dealing with issues regarding contracts, and balancing work/personal life when your business is ran out of your home. These struggles add to the barriers of providing quality care, but also deter people from becoming a provider. The providers admitted that when they were interested in becoming a provider, there was no where to go for information or support to get started and it is expensive to start the business, hard to get the word out, and difficult to maintain licensure. The childcare providers also suggested various broad issues that need addressed regarding providing childcare in Pott. Co. They admitted there is a need and they are getting calls weekly and even daily from

parents looking for care, that need will be difficult to address due to the heterogeneity of the county and its rural setting. They explained that having a waitlist does not help them as a provider or help the family who is searching. In fact, it tends to give families false hope regarding the chances of them soon getting a spot in the daycare. Instead they send them to Childcare Aware. They want to share other resources with parents because it does not feel good to turn them away when they don't have a spot for them. However, they don't feel comfortable recommending other providers because they are, in fact, running a business and issues of liability and competition surface.

More broadly, Kansas regulations make providing care very difficult. The regulations are difficult to understand and don't make sense. They cause barriers toward increasing capacity and make it expensive to become licensed and maintain it. The providers felt they were not treated uniform across surveyors. However, they also felt regulations are necessary and those people not licensed but providing care need to be penalized. Providers were specifically worried that opening a big facility would hurt their businesses and suggested the following things as ideas to help the need in Pott. Co.: Providing grants to allow providers to live in their house and have separate dwelling for care, supply more resources for ideas and support for providers, provide respite caregiving for providers to get a break, and educate new parents regarding the situation of childcare. Many of the issues surrounding affordability come from people not understanding how much it costs to maintain care, but they have strong opinions regarding what is too much to pay for good care. Many of the providers in this sample admitted they opened their daycare because they couldn't afford to work and to send their children to childcare so if they were going to stay at home anyways, this was the best use of their time. It is clear these providers held the need for care in Pott. Co. as an issue they wanted to help address. They admitted they did not prefer to run at full capacity but didn't want to turn families down. They also did not have the luxury of not running at full capacity because of the expense involved with providing care.

### **General Public**

There are definite childcare needs in Pott. Co. Because of a lack of childcare, access tends to trump quality which leaves families settling because the best spots will fill up the fastest. People have been forced to just "figure it out" when childcare issues are made extra difficult by having a certain job (third shift, or teachers) or having more than one child. Often they will utilize family and friends as makeshift care until they are able to find something better. However, when childcare quality gets too low, parents will consider staying home versus sending their child to a place they don't feel comfortable with. This need is perpetuated by a few things. One, being a childcare provider takes a special person and most admit they could not do it. Two, Pott. Co. is very spread out, so coming up with a solution that fits the entire county is difficult. Lastly, the community as a whole does not seem to value childcare as much as some individuals do. The members of the general public focus group identified having childcare within a community as a community and family development issue. They admitted that childcare goes beyond supporting a child from the age of 0-5 as it affects Kindergarten readiness, family issues and community issues. Having good childcare means having strong youth and families which builds a foundation for strong communities. If people do not have access to childcare within the community, they will leave the community to find childcare elsewhere which does a disservice to their community. If the people within the community value building it up, they need to address

childcare needs, encourage a better infrastructure to support entrepreneurship, and put better supports in place for providers.

Generally, there is a level of privilege that comes when childcare is scarce in a community. If you do not live at a certain income level, your access to childcare is affected. Furthermore, income level affects ability to afford higher quality care and/or being able to hold a spot when you don't need it. Quality seems to be hierarchical with safety being a basic necessity and educational enrichment being a perk. Childcare costs seem to exist on a continuum where parents believe childcare providers are taking advantage of a need and charging more and providers are adding children because they want to make more money but with that lowers the quality of care. Affordability and quality are related, but it is not a linear relationship. Parents will pay more for quality care, but only to a certain point. The general public also had numerous suggestions to address the childcare issues: educate new parents by advising them to look for childcare while they are pregnant, encourage new providers to purchase duplexes or houses with basements so their business is separate, utilize a church as a facility, encourage employers to help support the need, and consider what has been done before to meet childcare needs but don't make the same mistakes. They also suggested some sort of solution be created to alleviate issues even if it doesn't address all of the issues right off the bat because doing something right now is better than nothing.

## Discussion

### Summary

Taken together, mixing results and findings of the respective qualitative and quantitative analyses paints a useful picture for Pottawatomie County moving forward. Most importantly, there is a demonstrated need for child care across the general public, those with child care, and those seeking care. Child care providers also have multiple assets and barriers to success.

### Barriers

Some elements of this needs assessment should be quite concerning, for example, that *several* residents indicated that they plan their families' expansion based on available child care capacity. Research literature in multiple fields (e.g. human development, economics, community vitality) indicates the consequences of a profound lack of choice for consumers. Further, our results indicate that multiple aspects of family life, including commute times, needs for care in infant classrooms, and location of care all factor into the need for quality, affordable care in Pottawatomie County.

In our analysis, the most prevalent barrier facing families is the household income gap for those families with care versus those seeking care. Respondents with household income below \$90,000 (n = 67) were 2.34 times more likely to report cost as a barrier to care. To be clear, due to the limitations of the quantitative data, we cannot make inferences regarding the direction of this relationship (e.g. is household income low because they do not have employment). However, our qualitative data indicates that should these families be able to have access to quality, affordable care, they would be able to earn more than \$90K / year as a household while also contributing to the local economy in meaningful ways.

### Assets

Our respondents indicated both a recognition that child care in Pottawatomie County is needed, and that there is a place for businesses and governments to be involved in building this capacity. Further, Pottawatomie County has strong leadership in the community, allowing it to proceed with the recommendations resulting from this needs assessment.

### Recommendations

These data and analyses represent an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those living in Pottawatomie County. Our recommendations are based on multiple factors, and guided by the Social Organization Theory of Action and Change (Mancini and Bowen, 2013).

**General recommendation: Re-conceptualizing access to quality, affordable child care.** Because of the multiple benefits to economic, family, and child development, we recommend taking the approach that AQACC is a community-level need. The benefits of AQACC extend beyond any specific individual or family, and benefit all community stakeholders. We specifically recommend targeted community conversations aimed at providing

those in the community, without a personally vested interest, with information aimed at building support for AQACC. We recommend this process be implemented using the Community Capacity Framework (Emery & Flora, 2006) which identifies seven different elements of community capital: *natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built capitals*. We select this approach because of its emphasis on assets (rather than needs or deficits) and its focus on investments. These community conversations should be facilitated by trained practitioners.

**Specific recommendations.** Our recommendations focus on three main elements of AQACC: *Supporting Economic Development through Community and Business Investment Partnerships*, which includes *Supporting Existing Child Care Resources*, and *Supporting Community Development and Use of Additional Child Care Resources*. We recommend an approach to AQACC creating public and private partnerships to treat child care as a utility. Specifically, this involves creating ongoing and sustainable subsidies for child care staff wages and benefits, increasing child care capacity, and improving sustainability.

***Child care staff wages and benefits.*** This approach provides multiple benefits to communities and businesses alike. First, by providing competitive wages reducing staff turnover in child care facilities can be significantly reduced. The cost of replacing trained and qualified staff for child care businesses, including the hiring and onboarding of new staff can be cost prohibitive. Second, a stable child care workforce provides economic stability to both the child care employees (teachers and staff) and the families of the children in their care. This provides tremendous opportunities for local businesses to recruit and retain the talent necessary to maintain and expand their operations. Third, by investing in stable child care talent, businesses invest in their future workforce. With children leaving child care at age five, it is not unreasonable to believe that some entry-level positions could be filled by current students in 11 years.

***Child care capacity.*** Because Pottawatomie County is located in one of only three states in the U.S. requiring a ratio of 3:1 for infants in child care settings (i.e. Kansas, Maryland, and Massachusetts) the high cost and reduced capacity of infant care accommodations requires attention. Further, in PC the highest demand for services, and least available slots in child care facilities fall into the infant care category. In this needs assessment, child care professionals indicated that infant care often serves as a loss leader (meaning they lose money, but provide the service in the hopes of the infants growing and staying in the facility). This places undue financial and staffing burdens on the child care facilities. Moreover, this limits the availability of child care when local businesses seek to recruit and retain high-quality workers.

To address these challenges, we recommend that Pottawatomie County businesses and local governments invest in ongoing and pre-paid capacity for child care to aid in recruitment and retention of high-demand labor, support the child care workforce, and guarantee child care availability to support community growth. These investments take multiple avenues. We recommend starting with existing facilities to provide the resources expand their capacities for infant care. To accomplish the goal of supporting existing child care resources including providers, staff, and facilities, we recommend three main avenues: *training and technical assistance for child care staff, training and technical assistance for child care business owners, and provide assistance for facilities improvements.*

## Appendix A: Focus Group Questions

### Adults Seeking Care

1. Why are you looking for child care? (for example, so you can work, take care of elders, more time)
2. Please describe your experience while searching for child care
3. Please describe your experience with child care (where, when, how was it, what do you like/dislike)
4. What factors do you most consider when evaluating child care opportunities?
  - a. What would you do if these factors were not ideal?
5. What services do you think child care should provide? What does quality child care mean to you?
6. What services do you think child care should provide? What does affordable child care mean to you?
7. Please describe your ideal child care situation (e.g. setting, distance, hours, cost, number of children, culture)
8. If you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to improve access to quality child care? (What do you think would be most helpful for families like yours who are searching for care?)
9. If you have a child with special needs, what makes your search for child care different? (prompt: difficulties? Accessibility/Inclusion?)
10. Is there anything else we should know about access to quality, affordable child care as it relates to you?
  - a. As a community member?
  - b. As a family?
  - c. As an employee?

### Adults with Child Currently in Care

1. Please describe your current experience and satisfaction level with your child care arrangements.
2. What services do you think child care should provide? What does quality child care mean to you?
3. What services do you think child care should provide? What does affordable child care mean to you?
4. Please describe your ideal child care situation (e.g. setting, distance, hours, cost, number of children, culture)
5. Think back on when you were searching for care: Were you on a waiting list, and if so, what was that like for you? Was it helpful? How long did you wait before you either knew you were getting a slot, or made other arrangements?
6. What factors do you most consider when evaluating child care opportunities?
  - a. What would you do if these factors were not ideal?
7. What do you think would be most helpful for families like yours who currently have children in care? What, if anything, would you do differently? If you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to improve access to quality, affordable child care?

8. If you have a child with special needs, what factors did you consider for your current child care needs? (prompt: Difficulties? Accessibility/Inclusion?)
9. How has your need for flexibility affected your child care arrangements?
10. Is there anything else we should know about access to quality, affordable child care as it relates to you?
  - a. As a community member?
  - b. As a family?
  - c. As an employee?

### **Child Care Professionals**

1. Please describe your greatest successes in providing child care. What makes you able to achieve them?
2. Please describe the biggest barriers to your providing quality, affordable care for children.
3. What is the longest wait list you have ever had?
4. Please describe what you do when you are operating at capacity, and a family is looking for care.
5. If you had it to do over again, what would you do differently when building your child care business?
6. What factors are involved in your keeping your child care facility at its current capacity?
7. If you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to improve access to quality, affordable child care?
8. How do you handle requests for access to care for children with special needs? How do you handle the therapy needs for those with IEP's / IFSP's?
9. Is there anything else we should know about access to quality, affordable child care as it relates to you?
  - a. As a community member?
  - b. As a family?
  - c. As an employee?
  - d. As an employer?

### **General Public**

1. When you think of economic development needs of your community, what are the most important?
2. What immediately comes to your mind when you think about access to quality, affordable child care?
3. Are you aware of the need for access to quality, affordable child care in your community?
4. Do you think quality is important in child care? Why or why not?
5. Do you think affordability in child care is important? Why or why not?
6. What roles, if any, do you think businesses have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?
7. What roles, if any, do you think local governments have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?

8. What roles, if any, do you think churches and philanthropic organizations have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?
9. Beyond more compensation and benefits, if you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to improve your workforce recruitment and retention? Before today, would you have ever thought to use your wand on quality, affordable child care?
10. Is there anything else we should know about access to quality, affordable child care as it relates to you?
  - a. As a community member?
  - b. As a family?
  - c. As an employee?
  - d. As an employer?

### **Human Resources Professionals**

1. As an HR professional, have you ever considered child care's effect on business productivity?
  - a. If you have, what made you begin to think about it?
  - b. If you have not, why do you think it has not been part of your thinking as an HR professional?
2. In your experience, does access to quality, affordable child care affect employee recruitment and retention where you currently work? Why or why not?
  - a. Have you ever worked at a company or organization where access to quality, affordable child care affected employee recruitment and retention (in positive or negative ways)?
3. Has your organization considered employee-sponsored child care? Why? Why not?
4. What roles, if any, do you think businesses have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?
5. What roles, if any, do you think local governments have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?
6. What roles, if any, do you think churches and philanthropic organizations have in helping families with young children with access to quality, affordable child care?
7. Beyond more compensation and benefits, if you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to improve your workforce recruitment and retention? Before today, would you have ever thought to use your wand on quality, affordable child care?
8. Is there anything else we should know about access to quality, affordable child care as it relates to you?
  - a. As an HR professional?
  - b. As a community member?
  - c. As a family?
  - d. As an employee?